

SHOPFLOOR

Dear Santa All we want for Christmas...



IS FOR TESCO TO RESPECT OUR RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

COMMENT P2
COVERAGE P2/4



Happy Christmas to all our members
Let's make 2019 a great year for workers!

STRAIGHT TALKING

John Douglas

General Secretary
Mandate Trade Union

Our family is strong and up for the fight

CHRISTMAS is normally the time for celebrations and reflections on the year past. It is a time for family and friends and focus on the things that really matter.

The trade union movement is a family, a family of more than 700,000 workers in Ireland – all struggling for decency and respect at work, all trying to make a better life for themselves and their families.

The Mandate family of nearly 35,000 members has it harder than most, for we have to fight for everything we have and too often nowadays we have to fight to hold on to what we have.

Our members are to the forefront of nearly every struggle in Ireland, whether it's for decent wages, secure hours, a voice at work or just plain old respect.

We have had to take action to win things that for others is a given at work.

Our members are at the receiving end of so called "flexibility" and "sharp practices". They face very powerful employers who have very deep pockets.

But despite all that they face, I am proud to say that our family of members never shy away from doing the right thing. They have made and will continue to make brave stands against injustices both at home and abroad. Our members in LloydsPharmacy stood

up to one of the biggest corporations in the world and secured better wages and contracts. Our Paddy Power members stood up against the financial might of a massive company and won improvements in contracts and breaks. Our members in Tesco continue to fight against discrimination and fight for the right to have a voice at work.

Add to this the struggles of members in Dunnes Stores, B&Q, Debenhams and many others – our Mandate family continues to be a beacon of justice for all workers in Ireland – we shine a light into the darkness of employer exploitation and abuse.

Also, our members continue to mobilise around water charges, the housing crisis and the hospital crisis – our members get it, they know an injury to one is an injury to all. We have a proud and long history on matters of social justice both at home and abroad – our brave Dunnes Stores Anti-Apartheid strikers proved just that.

As we approach the centenary of the "first Dail Eireann" and its first democratic programme January 1919, we ponder on what could a real republic have looked like?

It certainly would not have 11,000 citizens homeless and 120,000 citizens on a housing waiting list, or 707,000 citizens on hospital waiting lists. It certainly would not have the extraordinary levels of low pay

and exploitation of workers and it certainly would not have tens of thousands of workers without a union voice at work.

2019 will be a historic year on this island – the first Dail was a 32 county socialist Dail whose first socialist programme, the "Democratic Programme", remains largely unfilled to this day.

It is our responsibility as Irish citizens and as trade union members to continue to struggle to achieve the vision of our republic – a republic of equality, solidarity and fraternity.

Mandate's programme for Decency and Equality at work is an extension of the work of our first Dail – no worker in Ireland should suffer mistreatment, denial of union rights and exploitation on hours or wages.

Let us all again as a union family pledge and resolve to fight injustices at work and in society in 2019. Let us all stand in solidarity to fight for a decent living wage, decent contracts of employment and a voice at work.

No Government or no employer has the right to condemn the majority of citizens/workers to a poverty existence so as to benefit the few.

Happy Christmas and New Year – 2019 the Year of Decency and Respect at Work.

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Tesco workers strike in Sligo and set to strike in Carrick-on-Shannon

ALMOST 100 Mandate members in Sligo went on strike on Thursday, December 6, after their company refused to follow agreed procedures with Mandate.

The strike was a resounding success, with the retailer very clearly impacted by the action. The support from the public, the trade union movement and fellow members of Mandate was described by local activists as "tremendous".

And as *Shopfloor* goes to press, Mandate has also lodged strike notice for Friday, December 14, with the possibility of more dates being added. Meanwhile, Tesco workers in Carrick-on-Shannon have also voted to strike and will be taking action on December 22.

The action in Sligo follows on from the retailer's complete lack of engagement with Mandate over two collective grievances that were invoked as far back as late 2017 in line with the company's collective grievance procedures.

North and West Divisional Organiser Ciaran Campbell, who has representative responsibility for the store,



Tesco's Carrick-on-Shannon store (above) set for pre-Christmas stoppages, while, strikers (right) at Tesco in Sligo hand out leaflets during the December 6 stoppage. The response from locals was 'tremendous'...

explained: "Having lodged two collective grievances involving canteen facilities and staff searches, the company hasn't engaged with us in any shape or form.

"This is despite the fact our representations are fully in compliance with the collective grievance procedures. The company has also flatly refused at all levels of management to respond to any of our correspondence."

He pointed out that both collective grievances had subsequently been referred to the Workplace Relations Commission. Despite four conciliation dates being offered to Tesco over a four to five month period, the company claimed that none of these dates

suit them. "We felt this had gone on long enough," Mr Campbell added, "and in keeping with Section 9(3) of the Industrial Relations Act, 1969 – where it states 'Procedures shall be deemed to be exhausted if at any stage an employer fails or refuses to comply with them' – we conducted membership consultative meetings following which it was agreed that we should ballot for industrial action."

In the ballot, in which 85% of the Mandate membership exercised their right to vote, some 97% voted in favour of taking industrial action up to and including strike action.

Mr Campbell continued: "After this result, we have had no alternative but to serve the due notice and then to go



on strike at this particular outlet.

"It goes without saying that aside from dealing with the actual grievances in the appropriate structured process, the company seems intent de-recognising Mandate as a collective representative body in their employment. Instead of adopting a mature approach and stating its intention either way over recognising Mandate, Tesco is intent on cherry-picking what Mandate's role will be."

He claimed this was "clear evidence" that Tesco was seeking to step away from collective grievance procedures and provided "anecdotal evidence" the retailer "was ignoring other important collective agreements".

Meanwhile, there are a number of collective grievances that similarly haven't been dealt through due process at Tesco's Carrick-on-Shannon store.

In one of these, the Labour Court recommended in June this year that any "failure to resolve the issue at Conciliation, [meant] both parties were required to move to the next step, i.e. a joint referral to the Labour Court".

Mr Campbell commented: "This direction was flatly ignored by the company. Subsequently, members there have overwhelmingly voted in favour of taking industrial action up to and including strike action with 85% of them exercising their right to ballot.

"We regrettably have no alternative other than make a stand and defend our collective role and the collective processes and agreements that have served both sides well in this employment.

"While the issues are important, especially to the members, the company's unfortunate disregard and ignorance is no longer acceptable," he said. "While this will obviously impact on our members as well as customers, it is high time the company comes clean about where it stands."

Sligo strike pictures: page 4



Picture: Phalinn Ooi (CC BY 2.0)

Union claim partially conceded

EARLIER this year, Mandate served a 3% cost-of-living pay claim on Dunnes, as well as seeking the creation of more full-time jobs and the introduction of a staff discount for all employees.

As has happened in the past, Dunnes refused to engage directly with the union and the claim was referred to the Labour Court.

In recent weeks, however, Dunnes management announced that a 10% staff discount would be given to all employees who had not previously

received it. Responding to this development, Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light told *Shopfloor*: "While this is a positive move, this partial concession alone falls way short of what is contained in our pay and benefits claim currently before the Labour Court.

"As we approach the end of the year it is remarkable that Dunnes, currently Ireland's leading retail company, has not awarded its staff a cost-of-living increase for 2018.

"Management's behaviour in this

regard clearly displays a total disregard for the valuable and indisputable contribution made by store-based staff in the delivery of the current success of the business."

He added: "Such a situation is totally unacceptable and it only strengthens our resolve to deliver for our members at the Labour Court. Ultimately if the company retains its position, our members may have to consider bringing their collective power to bear in order to bring about a fair and just resolution."

SURVEYS

MOPI-SuperValu: pay, hours priorities

THE current pay and benefits agreement at MOPI-SuperValu expires at the end of December 2018 and to prepare for the next set of negotiations a national survey of members has just been completed.

Unsurprisingly, the usual issues of pay and weekly hours were

given as top priorities by members surveyed. A national forum union/company meeting took place on November 28th, immediately followed by a national shop stewards meeting to finalise the approach for the forthcoming negotiations.

It's vital Penneys members take survey

MANDATE'S current pay and benefits agreement negotiated with Penneys management expires at the end of the year and to prepare in advance for a fresh set of talks, a national membership survey has been launched.

Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light told *Shopfloor*: "The

findings of this survey of members at Penneys will be used to prioritise the agenda for the forthcoming negotiations.

"It is vital that all members take time to participate as this offers a very real opportunity for them to have their views reflected at the negotiating table."

Lloyds issues set for Labour Court



FOLLOWING the recent temporary suspension of Mandate's industrial dispute at Lloyds Pharmacy, a comprehensive list of issues has now been referred to the Labour Court for its consideration.

Commenting on the move, Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light said: "Obviously any subsequent Labour Court recommendation will be central to whether our members decide to reinstate their industrial action in order to achieve a reasonable settlement of their ongoing dispute."

● Revenue confirms FRE rethink in letter ● Gen Sec: We must remain 'vigilant' over Dept's future intentions

Mandate wins Flat Rate Expenses restoration

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

MANDATE has received confirmation from the Revenue Commissioners that the decision to remove Flat Rate Expenses (FRE) for retail workers has been deferred until 2020.

Mandate welcomes the decision, but will continue to campaign not only for the maintenance of the FRE regime, but for increases for retail and bar workers.

More than 75,000 shop assistants claimed the expense in 2017 – worth between €24 to €48 a year, depending on an individual worker's income.

Revenue had decided to discontinue the allowance earlier this year for six categories of employees, while retaining the allowance for other workers. However, a high-profile campaign initiated by Mandate to highlight the unfairness of this attack on low income workers led to Revenue reversing their decision.

In a letter to Mandate General Secretary John Douglas, Revenue stated: "In the interest of fairness to all sectors and employees currently benefiting from the regime, Revenue has



decided that the effective date for the implementation of any changes to particular FTE categories will be deferred until 1st January 2020."

Commenting on the move, John Douglas told *Shopfloor*: "The decision to reverse the discontinuation of the Flat Rate Expenses for shop assistants is welcome, of course. However, it should never have come to this. Our members in retail, and many other low income workers, rely on this allowance so that they can cover some of the costs of being in employment."

He added: "Employers get to write

off a massive amount of their expenses, so it's only right that ordinary workers get the same entitlement."

Mr Douglas emphasised the need for workers to remain vigilant.

"It still appears to be the intention to review these expenses, with the possibility that they will be removed in 2020. The only reason they didn't proceed with these cuts now is because Mandate and ICTU lobbied and campaigned against the cuts.

"If they decide to remove the allowances next year, we must be ready to mobilise within our trade unions

and fight back." In the meantime, Mandate has urged all members to claim their expenses.

What are flat rate expenses?

Approximately 50 years ago trade unions negotiated for workers to be able to write off expenses accrued due to their employment for taxation purposes. This relief is for the purchase and maintenance of uniforms, tools and stationery, for instance. However, the flat rate means all workers in an employment category collect the same amount irrespective of how much expense they accrue.

How does it work?

The tax relief must be claimed by the worker because it is not automatically applied by Revenue. However, after you make your first claim, Revenue should have applied it every year thereafter.

The way it operates is quite simple. The relief allocated to your specific employment reduces your taxable income. For instance, if you are a retail worker and you earn €20,000 per year, your taxable income is reduced

by €121 bringing it to €19,879.

What are the allowances?

The allowances vary based on the role you are employed in. A full list of the 53 employment categories with 134 individual flat rate expenses is available at <https://bit.ly/2P6jU9X>

However, the industries appropriate to Mandate membership include:

- Pharmacists - €400
- Pharmaceutical Assistants (formerly known as Assistant Pharmacists) - €200
- Shop Assistants (including supermarket staff, general shop workers, drapery and footwear assistants) - €121
- Bar trade: employees - €93

How do I claim my allowance?

Under Revenue rules you are entitled to claim for the previous four years (2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017). The quickest and easiest way to claim Flat Rate Expenses is through PAYEAnytime, which is available online at <https://www.ros.ie/myaccount-web/home.html>

TESCO STRIKE PICTURE SPECIAL



SIMPLY THE BEST...

It's official! Mandate have the best strikers in the trade union movement!

MANDATE staff have won this year's Trade Union Festive 5-a-side tournament, which was held on Friday, December 7.

Mandate staff Eoin Griffin, Bill Abom, David Gibney and Keith Pollard (pictured left; back row, left to right) were joined on their team by the Nevin Economic Research Institute's Ciarán Nugent, who is also a member of Mandate.

Mandate defeated the INMO, Forsa, and the FSU in order to reach the final, where they beat the CWU (front row) in a thrilling 7-4 victory. Referee Dave Hughes (pictured

on the left) said this was one of the most thrilling games of football he had seen in his life.

Mandate's self-declared captain, Keith Pollard, told *Shopfloor*: "We're delighted to have won this prestigious trophy. It was one of those days when everything we did went right – but, to be honest, if it hadn't been for me, well..."

Mandate wants to thank Joe O'Connor from Forsa for organising a fantastic tournament. All proceeds raised by participants will go to organisations tackling homelessness.

What does a decent retail job look like?



Picture: Christian Schnettelker (CC BY 2.0)

Tesco campaign will set new standard for pay and conditions in retail

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

FOR decades workers across the world have been losing their fair share of the pie to corporate profits and dividends for shareholders. Workers in Ireland have been losing more than most.

Wages as a proportion of GDP in Ireland have reduced since pay peaked at 69% in 1975 and is now down at 44%. This marks the second highest drop in wage share out of 37 OECD countries, behind only Romania.

Now only Mexico and Turkey have lower wages-to-GDP ratios than Ireland out of 39 OECD countries. We also have the second highest proportion of low-paid jobs in the EU.

Surely there's a solution? Well there is, and it's simple. A major national trade union campaign that lifts the expectations of workers and allows them to fight for decent jobs with fair pay and remuneration.

Take the retail sector, for instance. Mandate has been calling for more full-time jobs in Tesco Ireland, in order to tackle the precarious work that is creeping into that particular employment. We've also been calling for "pay equality".

But what does that mean? In Tesco Ireland there are now effectively three pay scales. The top point of each pay scale for workers employed:

- before 1996 is – €14.31 per hour;
- between 1996-2006 is – €15.49 per hour; and
- employed after 2006 is – €12.95 per hour.

Most workers in Tesco do the same job, but some are on a lower pay scale. It is Tesco Ireland's intention to bring all workers on to the lower end of the spectrum, but it is Mandate's intention to achieve equalisation upwards.

In the coming year, Mandate will be campaigning to achieve a brand new

payscale for all Tesco Ireland workers. And this time, rather than having an 18-month waiting period to achieve your pay increment, we'll be campaigning for 12-month increments.

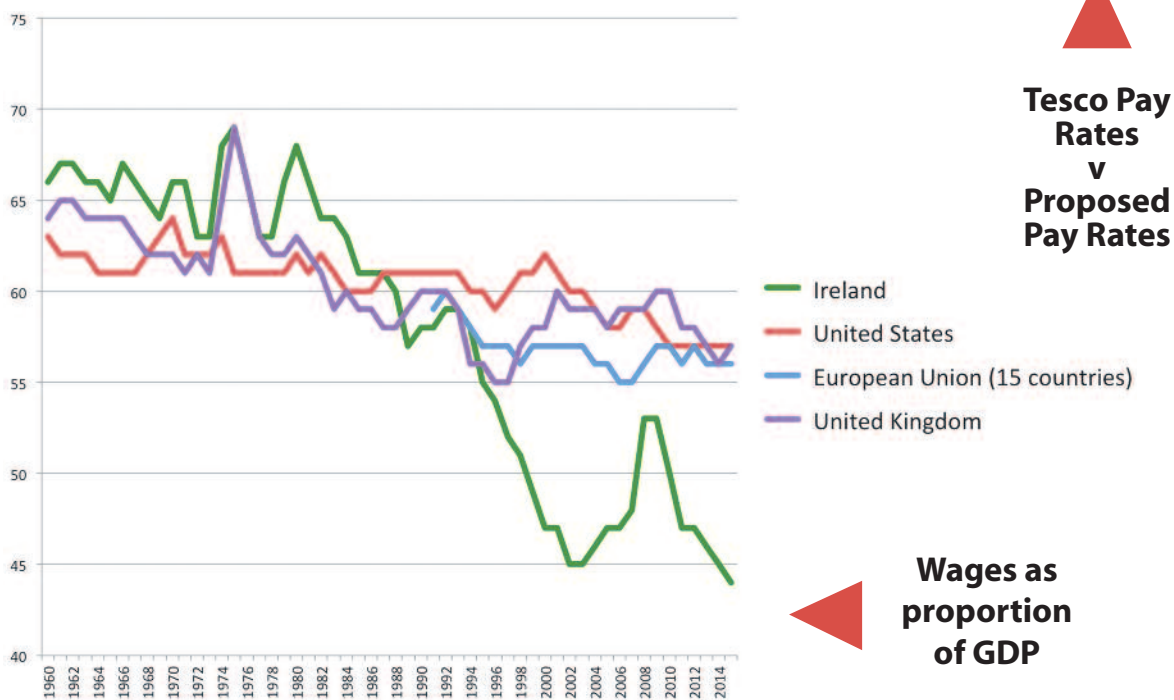
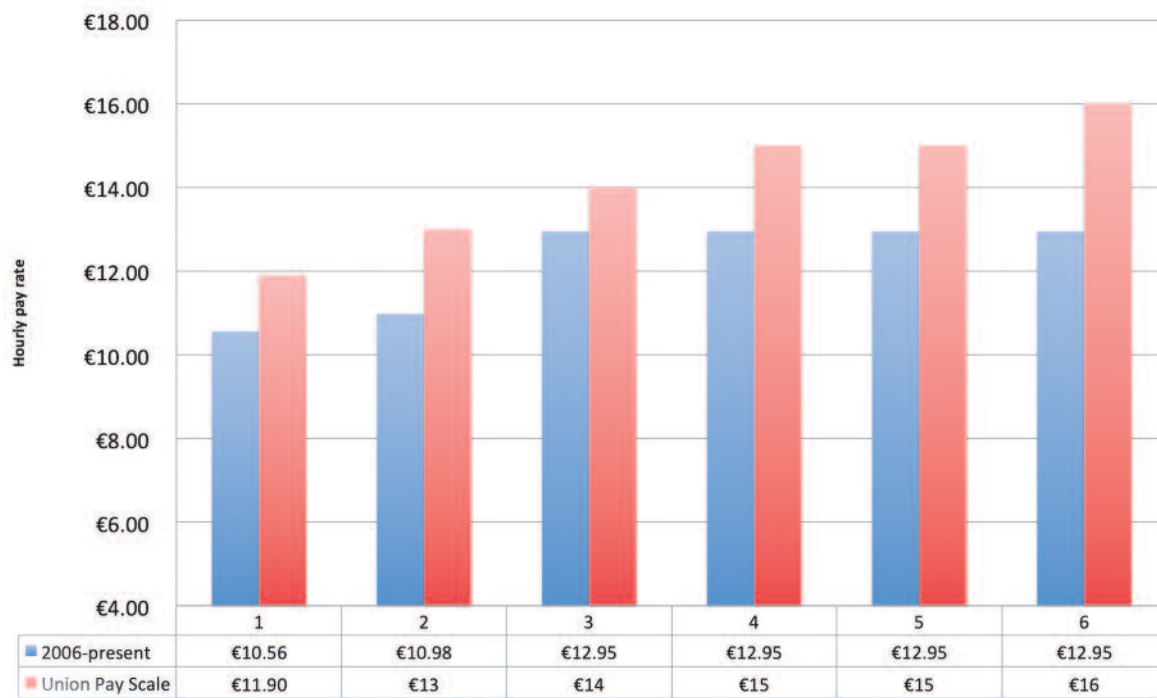
But what does that new pay scale look like? For all workers employed before 2006, they would automatically jump to €16 per hour. The new pay scale for those employed after 2006 would be:

Year 1 (Living Wage)	€ 11.90
Year 2	€ 13.00
Year 3	€ 14.00
Year 4	€ 15.00
Year 6 and above	€ 16.00

It is clear that Tesco can afford this. They are estimated to have made profits of €250 million last year, and should this new payscale be achieved, it would reduce profits by an estimated 10%-15%, leaving the company with a very generous 85%. Crucially, though, it would allow all Tesco staff the opportunity to have a decent standard of living in one of the most expensive countries in the EU.

Pay and remuneration is only one aspect of a decent job, though. We also want an extra 1,000 full-time contracts, better work-life balance with one weekend off per month, along with fairer rostering and scheduling arrangements. And importantly, the company should comply with all existing collective agreements and allow their workers collective representation.

These are just the bare minimum requirements for a decent job in retail. Tesco Ireland has been congratulating itself as a *Great Place to Work*, while at the same time their workers have balloted for strike action in at least two stores, Sligo and Carrick-on-Shannon. If the company wants to genuinely be a great place to work, let's start with some of the above.



● Mandate activist's terrifying checkout ordeal ● 'Crazed' raider was foaming at the mouth

Man used 'machete-type' weapon during attempted robbery at Dunnes, court told

ANOTHER frightening incident involving an attack on retail workers occurred on May 25, 2018, when a man brandishing a "machete-type" weapon attempted to rob a Mandate activist on duty at the Dunnes Stores on Cardiffsbridge Road in Finglas.

Garda Richard Finan produced the weapon used by 21-year-old Dubliner Karl McDermott during his subsequent trial at the Central Criminal Court on November 7.

Counsel for the defendant said McDermott had been taking tablets and had taken the weapon to commit a "completely irrational" robbery. He told Judge Melanie Greally that McDermott didn't need money, but was

"struggling in his own head".

The court heard that a Dunnes staff member was chatting to a colleague when she noticed a person walk towards the back of her checkout.

She told gardai this person carried a very long silver knife and that he had shouted at her to open the till. The raider stood behind her as she struggled to open it. She said that once she had managed to do so, she ran into an aisle.

The Dunnes said she next heard more shouting and saw the man being restrained on the floor by security staff with cash scattered around him. A colleague of the woman picked up the knife which had fallen to the

floor after the man was tackled by security staff.

One of the security men who restrained McDermott described the raider as being very strong, foaming at the mouth, and having a "crazy" look on his face.

Handcuffed

Garda Finan said he and colleagues arrived, handcuffed McDermott and put him in the patrol car. He said they were going into the shop to retrieve the knife when McDermott escaped the car.

The garda said he restrained McDermott again and this time placed him in a Garda van. The court heard McDermott later made no comment

at interview. Judge Melanie Greally gave McDermott credit for his early guilty plea, but noted that the weapon had been capable of serious injury.

She said she was taking for granted that the staff members were fearful and that the robbery had had lasting consequences for them.

Judge Greally imposed a five-and-a-half year sentence with the final 12 months suspended for that period.

This case illustrates the dangers retail workers often have to contend with. Luckily nobody was seriously injured on this occasion. But many other workers are not so lucky.

In a recent Respect Retail Workers

campaign survey conducted this year, almost 10% of workers said that they have been physically assaulted during the course of their work.

A Mandate spokesperson told *Shopfloor*: "We hope that the members present during this robbery are satisfied with the penalty imposed on the perpetrator. And we hope that all retail companies recognise the dangers faced by retail workers each day and take the necessary action to prevent assaults on their staff, both physical and verbal."

"We also want to commend the security staff who bravely tackled the assailant and prevented this particular incident from escalating."



MEMBERS of the Dunnes Stores Cardiffsbridge Road Branch, Finglas, are pictured following a well-attended and successful meeting on October 17.

There was a packed agenda with discussions on a range of subjects, including health and safety concerns, staffing level reductions, fair distribution of hours as well as dignity and respect issues. A new shop steward and deputy shop steward was elected as was a new house committee.

Dublin North Industrial Officer John Callan told *Shopfloor*: "Members were briefed on the latest developments in the Decency for Dunnes Workers Campaign and the amazing service given by shop steward Veronica Madden, who is stepping down after 25 in the store, was recognised. Veronica was thanked for her loyal service and commitment and all present wished her a happy and long retirement."

ICTU welcomes *First 5* strategy as progressive step forward

CONGRESS has welcomed the new Government *First 5* strategy as a positive development with a potential to deliver real changes for working families.

The initiative, launched on November 19, is Ireland's first ever cross-Departmental strategy to support babies, young children and their families.

Reacting to the plan, Congress Equality Officer David Joyce acknowledged that it sets out an important roadmap on how to improve the lives

of babies, young children and their families. He flagged up in particular the confirmation of the planned introduction of paid parental leave, which will see the gradual introduction of a non-transferable (between parents) paid parental leave in the first year of a child's life, rising to seven weeks parental leave over a three year period from late 2019.

This would be in addition to existing schemes of 26 weeks paid maternity leave and the recently introduced two weeks paternity

leave (to be taken during the 26 weeks following the birth of a child).

Mr Joyce told *Shopfloor*: "This is a progressive step that would in effect mean that parents would have up to 42 weeks of some form of paid leave during the first year of a child's life."

"It will enhance families' ability to reconcile work and family life and enable fathers to play a more active role in family responsibilities."

He said that Congress had long held the position that such arrangements should cover the full first year

of a child's life and pointed out that the proposal as planned falls short of this by some 10 weeks.

Mr Joyce said the reform of the Early Learning and Care (ELC) system, including a new funding model was also a significant area of action signalling increased investment and more favourable working conditions which he suggested would help to attract and retain staff in the sector.

He continued: "Current investment levels lag behind those of our EU partners and result in exorbitant

costs faced by families and an undervalued workforce where qualified educators earn on average less than €11 an hour with many on precarious 15-hour a week and 38-weeks a year contracts.

"Congress has consistently questioned the feasibility of achieving better early years services based on low pay and poor conditions and looks forward to an early resolution of this significant barrier to achieving many of the objectives laid out in this strategy," he added.

An all island trade union response to draft Withdrawal Agreement...

No such thing as a good Brexit for working people



The leadership of the all island trade union movement at its Executive meeting in Belfast on November 21, considered its response to the draft Withdrawal Agreement negotiated between the EU and UK. This is ICTU's response...

THE Irish Congress of Trade Unions represents the interests of nearly 800,000 workers on both sides of the border across the island of Ireland. Given that unique cross border perspective, we campaigned against Brexit.

We remain firmly of the view that there is no such thing as 'a good Brexit for working people' in Northern Ireland or in the Republic of Ireland. Any Brexit Withdrawal

Agreement will still be less favourable than full UK membership of the EU for working people across these islands.

The recent draft Withdrawal Agreement is essentially the end of the beginning of the UK isolating itself from the EU. It also remains to be seen if there is any real prospect of this proposed agreement commanding the support of the majority of MPs in the House of Commons.

We have always argued that if there has to be a Brexit, it should be as soft as possible given the very close nature of the 52% to 48% vote, as clearly the UK is extremely divided on the matter. In Northern Ireland the majority of people voted to remain.

Our objective has been, and re-

“ We must insist that a 'no deal' scenario that sees the UK crash out of the EU at the end of March 2019 must be avoided at all costs and is unacceptable. The consequences of such a 'no deal' Brexit would be catastrophic ”



ICTU Assistant General Secretary Owen Reidy

Picture: Congress

mains, the defence of the interests of working people on the island of Ireland economically, politically, socially and culturally. For this to occur we need to ensure that any long term agreement or a backstop avoids:

- A hardening of the border on the island of Ireland;
- A border in the Irish Sea;
- An economic border between these islands.

It is our view that the best way to achieve this is to negotiate as close as possible a relationship between the UK and the EU; preferably with the UK as a whole remaining in the Single Market and a Customs Union in the longer term.

Only by achieving this can we arrive at a situation where the rights of citizens and workers, and where jobs and trade will not be impacted to a detrimental extent by this Brexit.

A backstop is a fall-back position, an insurance that you hope not to

have to use. However, a UK-wide backstop with the entire UK in a customs union is preferable to a Northern Ireland only backstop.

We must insist that a 'no deal' scenario that sees the UK crash out of the EU at the end of March 2019 must be avoided at all costs and is unacceptable. The consequences of such a 'no deal' Brexit would be catastrophic.

We must also insist that both governments honour the full terms of the letter and spirit of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement.

The Common Travel Area, and all it entails, needs to become an international legally binding treaty between the Republic of Ireland and the UK.

In the case of Northern Ireland, the rights of citizens who choose to be British or Irish or both, need to be maintained and they also must have the capacity to vindicate those important rights. There must be a level playing field for workers' rights.

Retail JLC to be retained after Lab Court probe

FOLLOWING a recent investigation, the Labour Court has recommended that the Retail Grocery and Allied Trades Joint Labour Committee (JLC) be retained.

A JLC is a forum made up of employee and employer representatives that essentially sets a range of statutory entitlements for retail workers.

Commenting on the move, Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light said: "Mandate has recently submitted the names of its representatives to the Court.

"However, it is unlikely that the committee will be up and running any time soon because the employer group has shown reluctance to actively participate in the process over the past number of years."



Tesco activists meet up to discuss strategy

TESCO activists have held meetings in Kildare, left, and Limerick to discuss the ongoing frustrations brought about by the company's refusal to engage with their workers' representatives Mandate.

Both were positive meetings with unanimous support voiced for an escalation in the Tesco Workers Together campaign with an emphasis on achieving pay equality with an increase in family-friendly rostering.

The results of the Tesco Workers Survey as well as the pay claim for 2018 and 2019 were also discussed at the meetings. Expect some more news on the Tesco campaign in the not so distant future as Mandate prepares for a major campaign within the company.

Nolan's of Clontarf

Unanimous vote for revised deal

MANDATE members in Nolan's Supermarket, Clontarf, have voted in favour of a 3% pay increase backdated to July 1, 2018.

The members also endorsed a deal to cover any future introduction of Sunday trading should their employer opt to introduce seven day opening.



John Callan: join us call

Mandate and Nolan's management brokered a procedural agreement in August 2017. Following on from this, negotiations began in February 2018 to secure a pay rise for members in Nolan's.

Industrial Officer John Callan told *Shopfloor*: "Following several meetings between both sides, a set of proposals was balloted on by our members in July 2018. These included the proposed introduction of Sunday trading that made it compulsory for all staff. These proposals were comprehensively rejected by our members.

"Mandate argued that the proposed introduction of Sunday trading should be voluntary. After the overwhelming rejection of these proposals at a very well attended meeting of our members, further negotiations reconvened."

Mr Callan explained that following these additional talks, new proposals were finalised in September and voted on the following month.

These were:

- 3% pay increase backdated to July 1, 2018;
- Introduction of Sunday trading on a voluntary basis;
- The rate of pay will be time plus one third;
- Level of rostering for Sundays to be dependent on rostering needs but will likely be no less than one week in three;
- Present arrangements for Christmas Sunday to remain for staff.

When put to the vote, the proposals were unanimously accepted by members. Mr Callan commented: "Although these negotiations were difficult the local shop steward and house committee were determined to secure a deal.

"I would also encourage staff who are not already in the union in Nolan's to join at www.joinmandate.ie to help us secure yet more success in this employment."

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Picture: Rodrigo Senna (CC BY 2.0)

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Understaffing causes stress but managers can help, here's how...

LEADERS and managers whose teams are under-resourced could help prevent staff burnout by behaving better, a new study has found.

Joint research carried out by the University of Salford in the UK and the University of Waterloo, Canada, looked at the impact understaffing had on a group of workers.

A paper published in September in the *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* found that teams who were understaffed but had a manager who took that into account suffered from less burnout than teams that were understaffed but whose manager showed less consideration.

Professor Kirk Chang, an expert in human resources at the University of Salford Business School, outlined the research explaining why its findings were so important.

He said: "There is evidence that understaffing is becoming more of a problem all the time but it hasn't been studied to a great degree before now, particularly the impact understaffing has on groups of workers.

"We do know that understaffing causes great stress, burnout and health problems for workers, so we thought we would take a closer look."

The team asked nearly 800 employees and their bosses from 96 work groups employed by four technology organisations about their experiences and feelings.

They split the understaffing problem into two categories: one where there is inadequate staffing levels available to do a job and the other where there is not enough expertise to get a job done. Both situations can cause stress in the workplace.



Pressure at the checkout... Picture: Alasdair (CC BY 2.0)

Nearly 80% of those in the surveyed work groups claimed they felt stressed by understaffing levels and they believed this was impacting on their work performance.

Prof Chang claimed there were important lessons to be gleaned from the study.

He said: "We found that when there was an issue with managers and the way they reacted when faced with understaffing. They would react in a more emotional, empathetic

way when their teams lacked technical expertise.

"But when they simply lacked the numbers of staff to get a job done they reacted differently with less empathy and this resulted in more stressful situations for their employees, potentially leading to lower productivity and other issues associated with a stressful work environment – such as increased burnout."

Prof Chang pointed out that ultimately the company would be impacted "as staff go on sick or leave, potentially making understaffing even worse."

He added: "Although understaffing causes stress and recently has become a norm in the workplace, managers can still help. Our findings suggest managers should show more empathy in all situations where their teams are not appropriately resourced."



Picture: Sari Montage (CC BY-SA 2.0)

MALAHIDE GOLF CLUB



Driving up pay even in small employments

MANDATE members in Malahide Golf Club received a 2% increase in basic pay on October 1, 2018. This 2% was part of a 3% increase secured by the union in 2017 with staff receiving the first 1% increase backdated to October 2017 in February this year.

Industrial officer John Callan said: "This increase for members working at the golf club shows how even in smaller employments, Mandate can secure meaningful increases in pay. I'd like to thank the local Mandate house committee for their support and effort in negotiating this well-deserved 3% pay increase."

Picture: William Murphy (CC BY-SA 2.0)

International standard needed on workplace violence against women

THE Irish Congress of Trade Unions has joined with the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in a call on all governments and employers to back a strong and inclusive international labour standard on violence and harassment in the world of work.

The call came on the UN's International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which takes place on November 25 every year.

"We know that some EU governments are looking to water down text that was agreed this year," Congress Equality Officer, David Joyce told *Shopfloor*.

"We hope they will change course and that the Irish Government will continue to play a constructive role in the negotiations. With support from governments, violence against women in the world of work can be

wiped out by employers, unions and union members."

Mr Joyce explained that an ILO Convention could complement existing EU and national law requiring all workplaces to put in place procedures for dealing with violence and harassment victims' rights and ensuring perpetrators face sanctions.

He added: "It could make a huge difference to the lives of those living in countries with no such laws."

ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow said: "Violence and harassment costs lives and livelihoods. It affects millions of women and their families.

"Next year, the ILO has the opportunity to take a huge step towards a world of work free from violence and harassment.

"We are calling on governments and employers to join us in aiming high."

APPEAL

Mandate retired members branch hopes to expand

MANDATE'S retirement branch has already held a number of meetings in recent months and has decided to expand.

The branch is looking for former Mandate members who have retired to join and discuss issues of relevance, including the public healthcare system, the pension system, housing, mental health, etc.

Margaret O'Dwyer told *Shopfloor*: "We hope to be active in lobbying government departments and state agencies on issues of concern to retired people. We will also engage with other retirement groups throughout the country, and of course we will actively support Mandate and continue to participate in the growth of the union."

Membership is open to all retired members of Mandate whether they are on a private or state pension.

If you would like to know more, telephone 01 8746321 or email Margaret O'Dwyer at modwyer8@eircom.net or dgibney@mandate.ie

JOSEPH MURPHY LTD, BALLINA

Strike averted as workers win improved deal on pay...

MANDATE had issued strike notice of a full-day stoppage on Thursday, December 6 at longstanding wholesaler Joseph Murphy Ltd, Ballina.

But, according to Mandate sources, the strike was suspended at the last moment after the employer made an improved offer of a 3% pay increase as well as the maintenance of the VHI Scheme.

The welcome move, which was revealed as this issue of *Shopfloor* goes to press, follows successful representations by the union in the past that clawed back a 10% pay cut implemented to ensure the firm's survival.

Mandate had insisted that its members were intent on winning a "meaningful" pay claim that addressed pay lost over those years as well as recognising the contribution made by employees to maintaining the business.

Also, the company's now-shelved proposal to 'park' staff entitled entry on to a company VHI Scheme and/or a buy-out of the same scheme had

met with considerable resistance from members at the wholesaler.

North West Divisional Organiser Ciaran Campbell told *Shopfloor*: "The members felt so strongly on these points that at the last number of General Meetings I had with them, they were very exercised that the company was not putting a real and tangible offer on the table that they could accept.

"I have to add that they were very resolved on ensuring that the company paid them some respect on both these points – they wanted a meaningful pay rise and they wanted those staff that are so entitled to be immediately entered on to the staff VHI Scheme which appears to be a contractual right after 15 years service."

He pointed out that more than 80% of Mandate members at the wholesaler had voted on all offers and ultimately the ballot of industrial action. However, the ballot in favour of the new deal was 100%.



Ciaran Campbell: 'Real and tangible offer needed'

Mr Campbell added: "It goes to show, being in a trade union and being prepared to take action does lead to the best outcome for workers."

BOOTS

Dispensers group meet management

THE first meeting has taken place between the recently-formed Dispensers National Negotiating Team and management at Boots during which a range of issues relevant to the grade was discussed. Further talks are expected in the near future.

DEBENHAMS

Store closures top agenda at meeting

MANDATE'S National Negotiating Team met recently with senior management representatives at Debenhams.

The principal reason for the meeting was to deal with rumours about the poor state of the business at the retailer after it was disclosed that store closures were likely.

According to the union, while no firm guarantees were given over whether any of the 50 potential stores closures would occur locally, management remained positive about the relative performance of the business in Ireland.

ICTU sub-committee covering retail/distribution established

A NEW retail and distribution sub-committee has been set up under the auspices of the ICTU private sector committee.

The initiative, which is made up of relevant unions from across Ireland north and south, will attempt to address a number of issues currently impacting on the retail and distribu-

tion sectors. So far the following areas have been identified: new technology, online sales and Brexit.

Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light commented: "It is hoped the sub-committee will be able to bring some specialist expertise and knowledge to future decision and policy making within ICTU."

FINE GAE'L'S VANISHING ORGANS P35

TESCO

Mandate awaits Pre-96 claim date in Lab Court

THE outstanding pay claim for 8%, linked to the Pre-96 wage claim, has been submitted to the Labour Court and Mandate is currently awaiting confirmation of a date for hearing.

Assistant General Secretary Gerry Light claimed this was "yet another example" of Tesco management's refusal to collectively engage with the union "on an issue of importance to our members".

He said: "All members should take notice of this because if it is allowed to go unchallenged this approach will undoubtedly be increasingly adopted

by the employer across all industrial relations issues in the future."

Meanwhile, the Tesco 2018 pay and benefits claim has been referred to the Labour Court. It follows the retailer's failure to collectively engage on the claim lodged earlier this year. The claim includes:

- 3% cost-of-living pay rise;
- Pay equalisation – a plan to move all workers to the highest hourly pay rate;
- More full-time jobs.

Mandate is currently awaiting confirmation of a hearing date.

NEW COURSE!



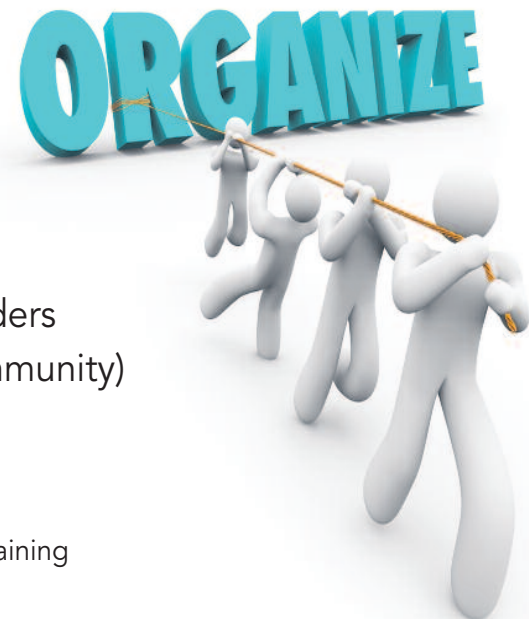
NEW COURSE!

Recruitment & Organising

This three day course is designed to provide trade union activists with the knowledge and skills to effectively contribute to and participate in their unions **Recruitment & Organising** strategy.

Course Content:

- Building workers power
- Engaging workers
- Talking to the undecided
- Handling objections
- Base building and collective action, identifying and recruiting leaders
- Mapping (workplace and community)
- Understanding power



Certification and Progression:

Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate Certificate.

Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email mandateotc@mandate.ie to secure your place.

Retail is changing fast - it's time to get smart

AS WE fast approach the end of another year it is becoming increasingly obvious that the massive changes in the world of retail show no sign of abating. It is also clear that retail workers are suffering as a result of these with many paying the ultimate price of losing their jobs, while those who remain in employment are working harder for less appreciation and reward.

It is an indisputable fact that the job losses that occur as a consequence will be far greater than any numbers likely to be created in the future.

As previously outlined in this column the main drivers of change are the growth in human replacement technology and the shift to shopping online away from brick and mortar stores. To say the shift to online in the past number of

VIEW *from the* SHOPFLOOR Gerry Light

Assistant General Secretary
Mandate Trade Union

years has been significant would be an understatement with the latest figures showing a year-on-year growth of 20% which represents 12% of all retail spending or, in real money terms, €5 billion of the entire €40 billion spend is now purchased online.

These statistics are obviously concerning from the perspective of retail workers. However, they also represent a stark threat to our public finances in lost taxation because 60% of all online sales are now done outside the country.

In Ireland we have already started to see the negative impact with a small number of retail businesses deciding to either exit the market or cut hours and jobs. With so many of the big brands headquartered in the UK a more revealing and worrying picture is evolving when you take stock of what is happening across the Irish Sea.

The latest figures reveal that some 85,000 retail jobs have been culled in the first nine months of the year. This has happened as a result of businesses either going to the wall or reducing their overall store base.

A deeper examination of the UK figures show that nearly 1,000 retail businesses went into administration between January and September. Consequently the number of empty retail premises

rose by more than 4,400 in the first six months of 2018.

All of these regressive developments are happening prior to the full impact of Brexit with many occurring now in anticipation of a worse case scenario. Despite the lack of clear detail at this time we can be sure what ultimately unfolds will not be positive as it will result in downward pressure on workers' rights and wages and a general decrease in living standards. In turn we are likely to see greater pressure on social welfare because of increases in part-time and precarious work.

Beyond the UK we are also witnessing the emergence of potential global retail alliances that when fully formed will aggressively prioritise the pursuit of profit over worker welfare or any loyalty to the State or so-

ciety in which much of the profits are generated.

These global retail giants have a vision of the future which does not have workers, either from an operational or ethical perspective, at its core. For example, Walmart, the biggest brick and mortar retailer in the US, has just opened its new futuristic store design concept Sam's Club.

This is how CEO Jamie Iannone described it: "There won't be another club like it. It will be a mobile-first shopping experience powered by the new Sam's Club Now app. At its core Sam's Club Now will be a technology lab that doubles as a live, retail club. It's where we will incubate, test and refine technologies to help define the future of retail."

He continued: "...workers in the new store will be called 'Member Hosts' and will operate as the 'Concierges' of the club who will be empowered with the new technology." What Mr Iannone does not highlight is the fact that prior to the roll out of the new store concept, more than 11,000 jobs were cut in a major restructuring programme ear-

lier this year.

Despite the appalling attack on store-based retail jobs that is occurring and the mischievous attempt by some employers to suggest that retained workers will be given more responsibility along with hollow fancy job titles the reality is that this will occur alongside a reduction in pay and job security with corresponding increases in productivity and precarious work.

It is only a matter of time before workers themselves come to realise that the dream of the future that is being peddled by certain employers is not capable of being realised because their own lived experiences could not be further from truth.

Recently we have seen worker unrest at two of the biggest global non-union firms, namely Google and Amazon, where employees took action because of the blatant failure of their employer to deliver on the false promises and standards they were sold as the core principles of the corporate model in which they work.

The message here is clear – workers are every bit as smart as the modern working environments they currently operate in. They should not be taken for granted and there is a breaking point beyond which they will not go. What employers must realise this is true of both unionised and non-union workforces. What workers must realise is the most effective way of channelling the disquiet that will inevitably arise is through the power of the collective that comes from being a member of a trade union.



Picture: Mike Mozart (CC BY 2.0)

Introducing Mandate's new...



Workplace Leadership Training

● Are you an experienced trade union activist? ● Are you also interested in learning and developing leadership & and enhancing your confidence and competence as a trade union activist?

Mandate is delighted to offer a new (part-time) one-year certificate programme in **Workplace Leadership**. This innovative programme is aimed at experienced trade union activists. The overall aims of the programme are to develop the key competencies, skills and attributes essential for activists to succeed in their roles as workplace leaders.

Course Content:

- Unlocking your leadership potential
- Personal Development
- Media Skills
- Understanding the changing context of retail
- How effective change happens or doesn't!
- Developing others
- Handling conflict

Programme delivery:

This part-time programme starts in September 2019 and will be delivered as a blended learning model involving attendance on approximately six days (one per session), with self-directed learning, together with practical and project work taking place between attendances. Application forms will be available in March 2019.

Certification and Progression:

Participants who successfully complete this programme of learning will receive a Mandate Diploma in Workplace Leadership.

Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email **mandateotc@mandate.ie** to secure your place.

They have left us a legacy that we are duty bound to fulfil...

Mandate activist **Denise Curran** (right) was one of the keynote speakers at the recent launch of the Sligo/Leitrim Council of Trade Unions. She took the opportunity not only to welcome this latest development in her home town but importantly referred back to the historic legacy bequeathed to current trade union and community activists in the area. Here is an edited version of that speech...

IT IS only fitting that the Sligo and Leitrim trade unions council is properly organised and active in a manner that can deliver for our workers and their communities. This relaunch will hopefully do that.

The Sligo and Leitrim areas are steeped in historic worker and class struggles ably led and personified by the likes of Countess Markievicz, Jim Gralton and Patrick Dunbar, to name but a few. They – and others like them – have left us a legacy that we are duty bound to continue and fulfil.

Unfortunately the struggles they waged and the reasons for doing so are as alive and important today as they were then. Irish workers – irrespective of [whether they are in the] public or private sector, their creed, colour, gender and background – are engaged in a daily class struggle against the oppressive neo-liberal economics that is cast as the only way forward.

That economic agenda has at its core and face, profit. The relentless pursuit of that profit undermines and strips our workers of their hard-won terms and conditions, their many collective agreements and ultimately trade union recognition. We, in Mandate, are facing these workplace struggles on a daily basis.

We have recently witnessed the

Lloyds Pharmacy dispute whereby Mandate's presence on that employment's pitch ensured improved wages and terms and conditions, but ultimately fell short of union recognition.

While we haven't gone away, it is difficult to comprehend how major companies such as Lloyds Pharmacy – which as part of the McKeeson Corporation, the largest pharmaceutical company in the world, rakes in profits of €11 billion per year – are legally allowed to ignore not only licensed trade unions, but worryingly government institutions such as the Labour Court over recognising unions.

A similar situation has recently developed with Mandate and the large gambling operator Paddy Power where, like Lloyds, this company has stated it will not recognise Mandate but possibly may talk with another union. These type of scenarios are reminiscent of the 1913 Lockout.

Similar non-recognition of Mandate currently exists within Irish retailer Dunnes and, as we speak, it is currently becoming the case with my own employer Tesco Ireland Ltd.

In the last year in the Tesco Sligo store we have lodged two collective grievances in line with the company's own collective grievance procedures. These have been absolutely ignored

by all levels of company management.

This clearly sends out the signal that Tesco is no longer prepared to entertain organised collective representations which is de facto de-recognition of Mandate Trade Union. It is for this reason that Mandate is considering serving official strike notice on this outlet for whole day work stoppages during December.

Again with this timely relaunch of the Sligo and Leitrim Trade Unions Council, we would appreciate your support in this struggle.

We are here to help ourselves as trade unions, the workers and communities we represent. If organised we have the means to do so. It won't be easy and I've no doubt we will encounter many setbacks but, as I've stated, we have inherited an important legacy that compels us to use all our means and resources to achieve our, and our predecessors', goals.

Cissy Cahalane, President of Mandate's predecessor union IDATU, once said: "The root principle of a trade union is not that of piling up capital but of improving the conditions of employment and lifting the worker to a higher state of existence." This has never been so apt as is now.



COMMUNICATIONS

Training Course (QQI Level 3)

DO YOU HAVE A DESIRE TO IMPROVE YOUR COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS? BUT NEVER GOT AROUND TO IT?

Mandate Trade Union in conjunction with Skills for Work is offering funded training. The courses are to encourage members back into learning and training whilst aiming towards a QQI Level 3 Award.

- Starting from scratch this course helps you to improve your communications skills.
- Courses are open to members who have not achieved their Leaving Certificate or who have an out of date Leaving Certificate.

Communication Skills:

For those who want to brush up on their writing and spelling skills while also developing personal and interpersonal skills which are important for dealing with workplace and personal situations.

Evening Courses take place one evening per week for a duration of 12 weeks in a venue near your workplace.

If you are interested please contact Mandate's Training Centre on **01-836 9699** or by email **mandateotc@mandate.ie**

Check out **www.mandate.ie** for further training courses. Places are limited and are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Courses are delivered by the Education and Training Board in a location near your workplace.



World's billionaires became 20% richer in 2017

BILLIONAIRES made more money in 2017 than in any year in recorded history according to a report by Swiss bank UBS. The report states that the richest people on Earth increased their wealth by a fifth to \$8.9tn (€7.9tn).

The report, produced by UBS and accountants PwC, said there was so much money in the hands of the ultra-rich that a new wave of rich and powerful multi-generational families was being created.

"The past 30 years have seen far greater wealth creation than the Gilded Age," the UBS Billionaires 2018 report said.

"That period bred generations of families in the US and Europe who



Illustration: HikingArtist.com/Flickr (CC BY ND 2.0)

went on to influence business, banking, politics, philanthropy and the arts for more than 100 years. With wealth set to pass from entrepreneurs to their heirs in the coming years, the 21st century multi-generational families are being created."

The world's 2,158 billionaires grew their combined wealth by \$1.4tn last year, more than the GDP of Spain or Australia, as booming stock markets helped the already very wealthy to achieve the "greatest absolute growth ever".

More than 40 of the 179 new billionaires created last year inherited their wealth, and given the number of billionaires over 70 the report's authors expect a further \$3.4tn to be handed down over the next 20 years.

"A major wealth transition has begun," the report said. "Over the past five years, the sum passed by deceased billionaires to beneficiaries has grown by an average of 17% each year, to reach \$117bn in 2017. In that year alone, 44 heirs inherited more than a billion dollars each.

"The calculation is simple. There are 701 billionaires over the age of 70, whose wealth will transition to heirs and philanthropy over the next 20 years, given the statistical probability of average life expectancy."

The 30 richest septuagenarians or older have a combined net worth of more than \$1tn.

Feeling it yet? Irish now 76% wealthier than at depth of recession

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

A REPORT by the Central Bank claims – on paper at least – Irish households are now more than 75 percent wealthier than they were during the recession. But the figures are almost entirely down to the growth in value of property in Ireland.

According to the latest quarterly financial accounts from the Central Bank, the net worth of Irish households hit a record €757 billion in the second quarter of this year, €38 billion more than the

€719bn record in 2007 and eclipsing the €430 billion recorded in 2012. The figure is calculated by adding the total value of the housing stock and financial assets – such as cash, savings, shares, pensions and possessions such as cars and antiques – and subtracting debt owed or liabilities.

However, it doesn't reflect the distribution of incomes and ownership of assets and only illustrates the levels of inequality that occur in Ireland. For instance, at a time when we have record wealth within Ireland, we also have record homelessness.

What the figures also show is that the poverty and deprivation that exists in Ireland today could be eradicated if there was a political will to tackle the crisis.

Figures also produced by the Central Bank show that Irish households remain highly indebted by European standards. Overall, households owed €138 billion or €28,423 per person. As a proportion of disposable income, debt is 128%, or the fourth highest in the EU. Mandate be-

lieves that all members should be concerned about the levels of debt and the growth in wealth based on property values in Ireland, because if there is another global or even local economic crash, we simply do not have the capacity to deal with it. Yet still, the Irish government continues its programme of tax cuts targeted at higher income households in successive Budgets with more than €10 billion taken from the exchequer at a time of crises in housing, health-care and education for our members.



Employment Law

This one day Progression Course in **Employment Law** is for Trade Union Activists who have a desire to improve their knowledge and understanding of employment law. Participants will gain an understanding of the legislative environment within which the employment relationship operates.

Course Content:

Sources of Irish Law

- Common law, judicial precedent
- Equity
- Constitution

Statute Law

- Primary legislation
- Secondary legislation
- Role of EU law. Directives

The role of law in regulating working conditions.

- The role of law in promoting Equality, H&S and best practice in the workplace
- The rights and duties of both employers and employees in the workplace

Certification and Progression:

Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate Certificate.

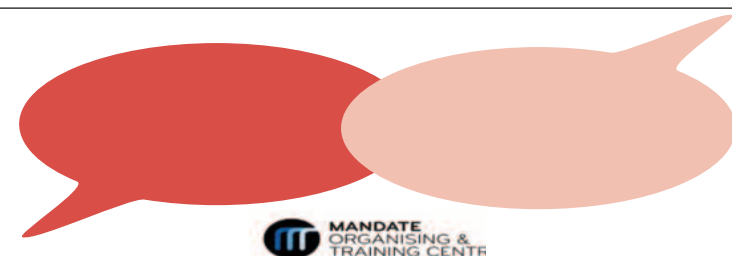
Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email mandateotc@mandate.ie to secure your place.

Contract of employment

- Distinguish between an independent contractor (contract for service) and an employee (contract of service)
- The nature of employers defences
- Redress/remedies in Employment law
- Terms of employment and Information Act
- Organisation of Working Time
- Payment of Wages/Remuneration
- Equality and Discrimination
- Unfair Dismissal and Redundancy
- Redress for breaches of Employment Law



STAY CONNECTED www.mandate.ie



Learn English with Mandate for free!

Mandate, your trade union, is offering English speaking classes for members. The course is for members who while speaking some English have never had the opportunity for formal training. In the course you will learn the basic grammar and improve your vocabulary. You will have the chance to correct those mistakes that your workmates are too polite to tell you about! Improved

Training is **FREE** to Mandate members. If there are 10 Mandate members who wish to attend this training, classes will take place in a location near to your workplace.

If you are interested please contact:
Mandate's Training Centre
on **01-8369699**

Places are limited and are allocated on first come, first served basis



Involved in a war against our will...

Maximum firepower: US Army Black Hawk attack helicopter

Picture: Jevgenijs Slihto (CC BY 2.0)

By James Rabbitte
Mandate Youth member

AN INTERNATIONAL conference against US/NATO military bases was held in Liberty Hall, Dublin, in mid-November. The three-day conference hosted speakers from across the world. Various groups, parties and individuals made the long journey to take part in the event – the first of its kind and most certainly not the last.

The one thing that all those who attended felt when leaving was the urgency of our mission.

Combined, the US and NATO have as many as a thousand military bases and tens of thousands of troops deployed in more than 170 foreign countries. This is an alarming figure and many of us at the conference were shocked to hear these facts.

United States is the biggest player propping up this outdated military alliance and it uses NATO to maintain its global dominance over the western and – yes – the entire world. Unless the ordinary people act, this trend will only continue.

The reason why the US and NATO maintain such a large military presence across the globe is simple – to ensure they have military, economic and financial domination. They are intended to grant corporate access to markets, resources and cheap labour. This is in the imperialist interest and is not in defence of national security.

The NATO bloc has served American interests – and, in turn, the United States has become the most dangerous threat to world peace.

However, one might ask how this can affect Ireland, a country that is not a member of NATO.

But in real terms, Ireland is essentially a massive aircraft carrier. Shannon Airport is being used by the US for refuelling and resupplying their expansionist and exploitive campaigns in the Middle East.

Some 61,000 American troops passed through Shannon Airport in 2017. This means that Ireland is not

only not neutral, but also subservient to the US war machine. The very fact that foreign troops pass through Shannon is a disgrace and a breach of Irish neutrality.

The Irish people are not a war-seeking, expansionist people. We are a people who understands what it's like to have foreign invaders come to our homeland and have our natural resources robbed, while the imperialist power enslaves the people and even assimilates the population into its imperial structure and organisation.

That is why the very idea of foreign military use being allowed in Shannon is a national disgrace.

Irish people, however, have no say as the Irish state allows this to happen – the very Irish State that historically is meant to be neutral.

The US is using Shannon to continue its 'War on Terror', a war that has been raging for the last 17 years and seems to be going nowhere.

Military gains

The US in Afghanistan has seen no military gains. In fact, the Taliban controls more territory now than it did when the US first launched their first attack. It should be remembered that the Americans actually helped fund and train Taliban fighters during the Afghan-Soviet war.

The war in Afghanistan has now expanded across the border into Pakistan including drone attacks and military arms being moved across the land.

This war in Afghanistan is becoming more and more like a second Vietnam, a war in which civilians have borne the brunt of the suffering and which has been prolonged for many years – a great waste of US taxpayers' dollars. Its wars in the Middle East will continue unopposed unless the anti-war movement gains more activists.

The anti-war movement is playing a crucial role in the aid of Irish neutrality and in defence of Irish inde-

pendence and democracy. That is why I attended the recent Liberty Hall conference. In truth, I was alarmed at how little representation there was from trade unions and students' groups at the event.

Historically, trade unions and students' groups have always been common allies of the anti-war movement. I attended the meeting as a trade union activist and a fellow worker of the world. I understand that with US and NATO, and now even the idea of a standing European army on the horizon, it will be ordinary people from the western world who will be called on to fight in these imperialist wars.

It will be Irish people and, like myself, young Irish people, who will be sent to fight in wars they want nothing to do with it.

In the memory of the brave men and women who fought as members of the Irish Citizen Army in 1916, we cannot serve the interest of foreign military powers, whether they be the old imperialists, such as Britain, or the new Imperialists, the US, NATO and the EU.

In the memory of our brave fighters of the ICA who flew the banner 'We Serve Neither King Nor Kaiser But Ireland' over Liberty Hall. It is the responsibility of western people to oppose the subjugation of oppressed people overseas.

It is the responsibility of young Irishmen and Irishwomen to oppose these wars. I urge all trade union activists and like-minded individuals to get more involved in the Peace and Neutrality Alliance in Ireland.

If anyone is interested in getting more involved, please contact Mandate's Galway office, telephone 091 562750.

The urgency of our mission is great and the trade union movement in Ireland will help in the restoration of Irish independence, democracy and neutrality.

INTRODUCING MANDATE'S NEW...



Workplace Union Representative Training

This three-day **Workplace Representative Training** course is for new shop stewards/union representatives. The course aims to provide information, skills and knowledge to our shop stewards/union representatives to assist them in their role in the workplace.

Course Content:

- The role of the Workplace Representative
- Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Employment Law
- Dealing with workplace issues
- Workplace Organisation & Communications
- Recruiting members and building a strong union in the workplace
- Organising and chairing meetings
- Political and Social Studies
- Supporting union campaigns
- Agreeing actions to build a stronger union in the workplace

Certification and Progression:

Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate Certificate. Members may then carry on their training and personal development

Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on 01-8369699 or email mandateotc@mandate.ie to secure your place.

NEW! Bar Workers UNION TRAINING

Mandate Trade Union is designing and developing this **Bar Workers Union Training** due to workers having identified training that they need and the need to raise awareness in their workplaces.

Course Content:

- Health and Safety in the workplace
- Health and Safety for the individual
- Personnel safety as a bar worker
- Legal entitlements for bar workers
- Know your employment rights
- Identification of further training requirements for bar workers

Certification and Progression:

Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate Certificate.

Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on 01-8369699 or email mandateotc@mandate.ie to secure your place.

I'm confident that we can build this into an unstoppable force

By Colette Conaghan
Mandate Youth Committee

I HAVE been a member of Mandate for 12 years now. I was 17 when I first joined the union. I did not know then what a trade union was or (for the first few years in my job) that I was even part of a trade union.

When I started to become involved I noticed our union was lacking in something crucial – a youth committee. We had 7,500 members aged under 35 yet no committee to stand up and have issues about which we were passionate about promoted within the union.

At the last BDC, I decided to put forward a motion to have a youth committee set up within Mandate. My motion was passed and the wheels were set in motion. I asked every delegate attending BDC who was under the age of 35 to meet with me to discuss getting this going before we left the conference.

So many of our young members are passionate about trade unionism and the fight for workers' rights. There was a fire in my belly to see so many of our activists looking to stand up and be counted.

We held our first youth committee meeting on July 10. Around 30 members were there to participate and



Colette Conaghan calling for the setting up of a youth committee at the last Mandate BDC

talk about the future of the committee. We agreed that we needed to vote in a chair, vice chair and a secretary. I was delighted to have been elected and given the opportunity to be the first chairperson of Mandate Youth. Amy Moran was elected vice chair and Adam Fallon was elected secretary.

On September 23, the officers of the committee met in O'Lehane House to set out what rules were going to govern the youth committee going forward. We also discussed what happened at our last meeting and outlined the main themes to focus on in the future.

We met again on November 7 to discuss a range of matters, including education, communication and engagement. We are now focused on securing training for young people to engage and be educated about trade unions and basic workers' and human rights. Trade unions don't just organise in the workplace – we organise within our communities too.

As it stands many of our young people – both in working and non-working environments – know little to nothing about trade unions as we do not educate them about the subject in school. In my opinion this should be done.

“ There was a fire in my belly to see so many of our activists [at our BDC] looking to stand up and be counted... ”

We are hoping to find our way into schools and universities in order to give talks and educate youth about Mandate, in so doing, giving them more information before they start their working life. Education is key to building a strong future together.

We have great challenges as well as great opportunities ahead of us and I am confident that with the strength and unity of Mandate Youth committee, we shall meet them all.

I am proud to be standing beside a group of strong-minded men and women who have the same passion for this trade union as I do. Together we plan on building Mandate Youth into an unstoppable force within Ireland.

59% of attacks on UK retail staff go unreported

UK shopworkers union Usdaw has called on its members not to “suffer in silence” but to report any incidents of violence, threats or abuse they are subjected to at work.

The call comes as it was revealed that 59% of retail workers who took part in the union-commissioned ‘Freedom from Fear’ survey admitted they did not report such incidents to their employer.

The interim results show that one in six shopworkers who were physically attacked did not report the assault. Other findings include:

- Six in 10 shopworkers experienced verbal abuse;
- 37% threatened by a customer;
- More than 230 retail staff are assaulted every day in the UK.

Udaw General Secretary Paddy Lillis said: “All too often shopworkers encounter violence, threats and abuse for simply doing their job. So it is very concerning that over half have never reported an incident.

“My message to shopworkers is very clear, abuse is not a part of the job. We are talking to employers to ensure that reporting systems are easily accessible and will make a real difference to the protection.

“However, it is really important that staff do tell their manager when they experience violence, threats or abuse. If they report it we can help sort it.”



Health and Safety Representation for Elected Reps QQI Level 5

This five-day QQI Level 5 Health and Safety Course is for elected Health and Safety Representatives. The following topics will be covered on the course:

- Health & Safety Legislation ● Role of Health & Safety Representative
- Safety statements ● Role of Health & Safety Authority
- Occupational health ● Identification of hazards and risk assessment
- Accident investigation ● Fire safety ● Effective communications
- Health and safety promotion

Members who successfully complete this Training Course will obtain a QQI Level 5 Certificate in Health and Safety.

Please contact your Mandate Union Official or Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** if you are interested in taking this course; or alternatively you can email your request to mandateotc@mandate.ie



NEW COURSE!



Presentation & Speech Design and Delivery

This two day course is designed to provide trade union activists with the knowledge and skills to prepare, present and deliver presentations effectively with in their roles.

Day 1 - Course Content:

- Designing a Presentation
- Preparation & Practice
- Methods of Presentation
- Structuring a Speech
- Not Overloading
- Individual Task (Beginning your Speech)

Day 2 - Course Content:

- Engaging the Audience
- Communication Skills Verbal and Non-Verbal
Verbal: *Time, Pitch, Create Effect*
Non-Verbal: *Physical Orientation, Posture, Breathing Exercise*
- Active Listening, Speech Timing
- Speech Delivery
- Overcome Nerves & Anxiety
- Individual Speech Practical Exercise

Certification and Progression:

Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate Certificate.

Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email mandateotc@mandate.ie to secure your place.



It's time to capitalise on worker co-ops

By Paul Gavan & Barry Kearney

WE NEED to change the way society views Co-Operatives. We need to move away from the idea that co-ops are some sort of nice community idea which friendly people in little towns do; and we instead need to see co-operatives as the major game changer that our economy badly needs.

The unfortunate reality of Ireland's FDI-driven modern economy is that co-operatives have been largely marginalised by the State as some sort of novel but unimportant enterprise model.

What many people don't realise is that co-operatives are actually quite a big deal across Europe and make up a significant percentage of GDP in countries such as Finland, Sweden, France, Scotland, Italy and Spain.

The academic literature specifically focusing on worker co-operatives is constantly growing and a broad consensus supports the claim that worker co-operatives are often found to be more resilient, more productive, and provide greater social benefits to workers and their communities when compared with traditional enterprise.

Sinn Féin believes that developing such a sector in Ireland has the potential to not only generate significant job growth but also presents us with an opportunity to greatly expand worker-ownership of businesses. The concept of workers growing their share of ownership in the business in which they work goes to the very heart of the fundamental structural change that we need to make to the Irish economy. We need an economy in which workers have a meaningful collective share in capital ownership and therefore a say in the decision making process.

If we are serious about addressing the inequality which exists in our society, then we need to deal with how businesses are owned and how those enterprises make decisions. The worker co-operative model provides a practical alternative.

Essentially, a worker co-operative is a business owned and democratically managed by its workers. In this form of enterprise, workers own all or the majority of the shares. Therefore, not only do workers have a say with regards to the process of production, but they also have a say in how the company's net revenue is distributed.

They decide what pay ratios should exist within the business, how much of the surplus should be placed in a rainy-day reserve fund for workers. They also hire and fire the managers! This isn't fairy-tale stuff; this is the reality in several European countries.

In Italy alone there are more than 800,000 workers in the sector. Spain is home to the world's largest worker co-operative, Mondragon Corporacion Cooperativa, which has 80,000 workers. Worker co-operatives make up between 5% to 21% of GDP in countries such as Sweden, Finland, Canada and France. It is therefore unsurprising that the worker co-



Co-operative colossus: Mondragon employs 80,000 workers in Spain

operative movement is gathering momentum elsewhere. It was only in July 2018, that a document commissioned by the Co-operative Party UK recommended that each year all shareholder-owned businesses would be compelled to deposit an annual share of its profits into a worker-controlled fund in the form of equity – therefore, over time giving its workers greater control over the company in the form of a collective shareholding.

Across Europe similar policies to support the worker co-operative model have already been introduced. In Spain, the 'Pago Unico' law allows unemployed workers to receive their unemployment benefit for the next two years in one lump sum as a worker co-operative capital start up fund. In Italy, the Basevi laws allow for co-ops to transfer net revenue into a reserve fund free of corporation tax on condition that the money is used to pay workers' wages during an economic downturn.

Hierarchical

In France, the 'Social and Solidarity Economy Law' has facilitated the transition of hundreds of hierarchical top-down businesses into democratic functioning worker co-operatives. Surely, we can learn from these countries.

In 2002, closer to home, it was just as the Fianna Fáil and PD coalition government made the decision to close down Ireland's very own Co-operative Development Unit (CDU), that Scotland's government was developing their own Co-operative Development Sector (CDS) with the remit of developing and transitioning business' towards a co-operative model.

Today, Scotland's CDS unit is thriving. The sector is supported by policies such as a worker co-operative buy-out model, a community right-to-buy policy and an inclusive ownership framework. All funded by a budget of £3 million each year for start-up grants. The CDS has already transitioned 50 traditional conventional businesses into worker co-operatives and has a target of creating a further 350 new co-ops by 2026. How are they going to do this?

In recent years, France, Italy and Scotland have all moved to introduce what is known as the Worker Co-op Buyout model. A process through which the workers of a conventional enterprise can sit down with their trade union and/or government to pool their resources to buy out the business in which they work and transition it into a worker co-operative. Quite often this opportunity will arise when the business is considering succession options.

It is estimated that in the EU each year, 150,000 enterprises and 600,000 workers are affected by retiring owners who have no succession plans. Surveys in France and Canada have

predicted that well over 50% of SMEs in the next 10 years will face succession challenges. Ireland is no different. In 2016, a PwC survey found that only one in seven Irish SMEs had a robust succession plan. As we come to terms with our retiring 1950's 'baby boomers', there are huge opportunities for worker co-operative

“ Workers should have a choice as to whether they want to work in a hierarchical enterprise where they have no voice, or whether they want to work in a democratic environment ”

transitions. In our 2019 alternative budget, Sinn Féin allocated €2.25m towards the development of worker co-operatives. This commitment is supported by a worker co-operative policy document which our office published last year. In government, Sinn Féin would re-establish the Irish Co-operative Development Unit. The remit of this network would be to finance, support and co-ordinate the development of the worker co-operative sector. We recognise the importance of this sector and we are determined to establish a level playing field.

Workers should have a choice as to whether they want to work in a hierarchical enterprise where they have no voice, or whether they want to work in a democratic environment. Consumers should have the choice as to which enterprise model they want to support.

Irish society should have the choice between an economic model which functions democratically, or whether they want to keep the model we have today which produces such gross levels of inequality. If we want to deal with inequality, it starts with workers and their workplace.

Paul Gavan is a Sinn Féin senator



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Report highlights impact of on the edge and signposts

PRECARIOUS work is causing hardship, is affecting health and family lives, and deepening inequalities in the workforce across Ireland, a major new report has found.

It reveals a concerning picture of workers experiencing instability, insecurity and unpredictability in their working hours, their incomes, as well as their living conditions, health, life choices and futures.

Precarious Work Precarious Lives: How Policy Can Create More Security is a qualitative research report published by TASC (Think Tank for Action on Social Change) in partnership with FEPS (The Foundation for European Progressive Studies).

It calls on the Government to take urgent action to stop the rise of precarious work and the material deprivation associated with it, starting with a 'job quality' rather than a 'job first' activation policy.

The study confirms that precarious work is no longer a feature of just the 'gig economy' and that most people in precarious work situations are at increasing risk of experiencing in-work poverty. They have no guarantee of hours or income from week to week, they receive no sick pay, no annual leave, no pension entitlements, and often can't be sure that they can cover basic monthly bills such as rent. Precarious work is also forcing many people to rely on social protection to compensate for their irregular employment conditions.

The report finds that younger people are at particular risk and that most want 'old fashioned' reliable jobs. As one young person interviewed as part of the research says about modern work flexibility: "Flexible working conditions is great for them (employer) but it just means total uncertainty for me."

While precarious work exists across Europe, Ireland is an outlier in not having universal access to primary healthcare. It also has a very low level of investment in childcare.

According to the report's lead author Sinead Pembroke, these poor state supports, compounded by the current housing emergency, is creating a pressure cooker situation where precarious work is making lives particularly difficult.

She told *Shopfloor*: "This research reveals that precarious work, for a high number of people, is simply not conducive to having a decent standard of living, to having a family, securing a home or even going to the doctor if you're sick.



Voices from the report...

On forced social protection...

"You're always on different hours on different days... Sometimes four hours, sometimes six hours. But you had to be 100% flexible. I want to work full-time. I'm there 10 years now and there is nothing I would love more than not to have to go near the welfare system. I want to be able to pay my bills myself. I don't want to have to depend on anybody else, especially the welfare system."

– Louise Retail worker

On flexibility...

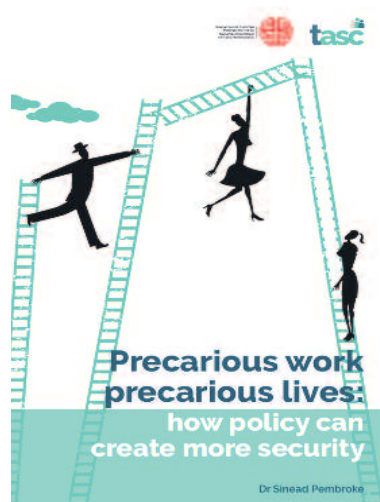
"At the moment, I don't even have a contract and I've been working at this company for a year. Tomorrow they could tell me anything. Flexible working conditions is great for them but it just means total uncertainty for me."

– Elaine Temporary commercial archaeologist

On bogus self-employment...

"You're self-employed but you're not really; you're working as an employee but they want you to put it as self-employed."

– Michael Temporary English Language teacher



"It is also imposing 'forced infantilization' on many younger workers, by making them dependent on parents or family for much longer than they would wish.

"Permanent full-time workers also experience many of these challenges. But, the insecurity of contracts and unpredictability of hours and wages puts precarious workers at an even greater risk of poverty and material deprivation, of stress and anxiety and entrapment in a life without basic choices."

Pembroke added: "Business needs cannot come before workers' needs as a Government policy."

The report recommends a number of changes related directly to employment protection, including a call for legislation to ban 'if and when' contracts and a living wage rate to replace the minimum wage.

Pembroke stresses, however, that there should be a combination of measures across multiple areas to address the damaging impacts of precarious work, including universal coverage of healthcare and childcare, as well as policies to make housing more affordable and accessible.

The research also confirms that precarious work is no longer confined to the 'gig economy' – such as

couriering – but is expanding into sectors previously considered secure and well paid, like teaching, human health, university lecturing, telecommunications and IT or work with state services.

Of the 44% of people employed in Ireland that are not protected by a standard or permanent employment contract, 19.75% are part-time, 8.4% are in temporary work, 2.4% are in temporary agency work, 13% are self-employed. As a percentage of self-employment, 68.5% are solo-self-employed.

Those at the highest risk of precariousness are people in part-time, zero-hour/if-and-when, temporary

working life lived a way forward...



Report lead author TASC's Sinead Pembroke (centre) with (from left) Labour Senator Ged Nash; Mary Murphy, Dept of Sociology Maynooth; Mary Claire McAleer from the National Youth Council; and Sinn Fein Senator Paul Gavan

On mental health...

"I've lost a lot of friends, which is also hard because I have no support socially. And I think that's fed into my depression... I think a lot of that is due to our situation, and not being able to afford to go and do things with people, let alone time."

– Noel

On children and childcare...

"When my first one was born I gave up working because it was cheaper to do it that way. My wife is on maternity leave at the moment so I'm back working full-time. But next January, I'll have to give up working again to pay because it's just not worth my while. We can't afford it. My wages don't cover childcare."

– Peter Father

and solo self-employment.

The report finds, however, that many people don't even recognise that they are in precarious contract situations, making it difficult to get an accurate picture of the full extent of precarity within the Irish labour market.

The research involved four focus group sessions with people in precarious work situations and 20 interviews with policy experts.

It examines five major policy areas and the scope for progressive interventions across employment protection, social protection, health, housing and childcare.

What the Government Can Do...

1. Legislate to ban 'if-and-when' contracts.
2. Replace minimum wage with the living wage rate.
3. Introduce a strict legal definition of self-employment.
4. Ensure a 'job quality' rather than 'job first' activation policy.
5. Legislate for paid sick leave to be provided by all employers.
6. Strengthen private rental sector legislation to provide for security of tenure.
7. Legislate to give trade unions a right to recognition and a right to access.
8. Introduce universal GP care for all and the full implementation of Sláintecare.
9. Increase investment in childcare to UNICEF's international target of 1% of GDP.

Training & Development (QQI Level 6)

The **Training & Development** course is designed to enable learners attain skills, knowledge and confidence to organise and deliver training and development in a range of organisational contexts.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners should be able to recognise best practice in adult learning and development.
- Appraise different learning styles
- Conduct training needs analysis
- Design training to meet identified needs
- Prepare training programmes
- Develop lesson plans
- Identify learning outcomes and put in place relevant methods to access learning
- Develop and use a range of teaching materials
- Evaluate training and development interventions.

*This course will be delivered in two parts.
Each part is of three days duration.*

Certification and Progression:

Members who successfully complete this course will obtain a QQI Level 6 Award.

Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email **mandateotc@mandate.ie** to secure your place.



Political & Social Studies

This two day **Political & Social Studies** course is for trade union activists who have a keen interest in the Political & Social Economy and who have questions regarding the wider social agenda in Ireland and globally.

Course Content

- The politics of economics
- Understanding the Irish economy
- The Global Financial Crash and what it means
- The Great Recession and permanent austerity
- Democratizing economics
- The power of trade unions
- Connecting with communities
- Reflecting community diversity

Certification and Progression:

Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a Mandate Certificate.

Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email **mandateotc@mandate.ie** to secure your place.

The far right triumphs in Brazil but the Left are **NOT** down and out



Picture: Marcos Brandao/Senado Federal

By **Dónal Boushel**
Tesco Santry Shop Steward

THE election of the far right-wing populist Jair Bolsonaro as president of Brazil marks the beginning of an intense period of reaction. It also signals the definitive end to the social democratic experiment that began in 2002 with the election of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) candidate Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

That long process of reform, which saw more than 30 million people lifted out of grinding poverty, was disrupted by a 'soft' coup in 2016. That coup toppled Lula's successor Dilma Rousseff and eventually saw him imprisoned on bogus charges of corruption, preventing him from running in 2018.

PT chose former education minister Fernando Haddad as Lula's successor. His defeat ends all hope of a continuation of the progressive development of the country for the foreseeable future.

How did such a dramatic change occur in the space of only a few years? The global economic downturn in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis undoubtedly played a role in undermining support for PT.

The Brazilian economy slowed down and entered a lengthy recession under Dilma. International capital and the national bourgeoisie had previously tolerated PT rule so long as profits continued to flow.

PT's unwillingness to engage in wholesale privatisations of public companies and services; their defence of workers' rights and their support for fighting corruption eventually led to intense opposition from Brazil's traditional rulers and US imperialism.

Ironically, given PT's efforts to tackle the issue, corruption scandals proved to be the most effective



Hugs in Brazilian legislature for far-right populist Jair Bolsonaro following his election as President of Brazil

Picture: Pedro Franca/Agencia Senado (CC BY 2.0)



Bolsonaro supporters with anti-Lula poster

Picture: Família Bolsonaro Public Domain

weapon in the arsenal of those who orchestrated the 2016 coup. The dubious charges leading to Dilma's impeachment were often conflated with revelations about corruption at Petrobras, the state-owned energy company.

That all major parties have been caught up in this kickbacks scandal has been largely ignored by the mainstream media, which instead focuses the blame on PT.

Bolsonaro and others have cleverly exploited the economic crisis, corruption scandals and the ever-increasing rate of violent crime. The latter issue in particular has garnered support for the former army captain and his fascist Partido Social Liberal (PSL) among broader sections of society, without which he could never have challenged PT in a 'free election'.

Last year there were more than 60,000 murders in Brazil, a figure comparable to many warzones, and so it is understandable that there is genuine concern about public safety, even among the working class and poor who often bear the brunt of the violence.

Bolsonaro and PSL's 'solutions', however, will only exacerbate the many crises facing Brazilian society. They had very little to say about the economy during the election campaign, but what they did promise was tax cuts, mass privatisations and an end to vital welfare programmes.

Far from addressing endemic corruption, the privatisation of state-owned companies will only reduce accountability as any kind of public oversight will be removed. Many of PSL's congressional and gubernato-

rial candidates in this election are serving or retired military and police officers. This fact is an indication of how the party and Bolsonaro will approach questions of public security.

Bolsonaro has often called for the police and army to adopt a 'shoot to kill' policy, not unlike the one used by British state forces in Northern Ireland during the recent conflict. Suspected bandits should be shot dead, according to this view.

Police and military

Free him! Supporter of jailed former President Lula

Picture: Anselmo Cunha (CC BY 2.0)





Still banging the drum for progressive politics in the aftermath of the Bolsonaro victory

Picture: Anselmo Cunha (CC BY 2.0)

terror is already a massive problem in the poorest areas of Brazil's major cities. However, with enhanced legal protection, many officers may feel emboldened to engage in extrajudicial killings on a far greater scale as witnessed in the Philippines following the election of the reactionary Rodrigo Duterte.

Despite their obvious limitations, however, these policy positions have clearly worked as not only did Bolsonaro win with 55.7% of the national vote; PSL saw its congressional vote increase by 680%! They are now the second largest party in the lower house of the Brazilian congress.

The harnessing of genuine economic and security concerns, coupled with hysterical anti-communism and deep-seated racism, have propelled Bolsonaro and PSL from the lunatic fringe to the centre of Brazilian politics.

The fact that they now occupy this centre ground, so to speak, has normalised their fascist views to an alarming extent. The traditional party of the bourgeoisie and middle classes, Partido Social da Democracia Brasileira (PSDB), has been abandoned in these elections and only received a humiliating 4.9% in the first round of the presidential election.

Not all hope is lost, however. PT is far from being a spent force. Lula would undoubtedly have beaten Bolsonaro had he been able to contest the election and perhaps Haddad would have closed the gap with more time.

Despite losing some seats, PT remains the largest party in the Federal Chamber of

Picture: Anselmo Cunha (CC BY 2.0)



Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) despite losing seats in the election remains the biggest party in Brazil's Federal Chamber of Deputies

Picture: Luci Correia (CC BY 2.0)

Deputies and secured several gubernatorial seats. Its core vote, concentrated in the North East of the country, remained largely intact.

The Partido Comunista do Brasil (PCdoB) lost some federal seats but nevertheless returned nine deputies and retained the governorship of Maranhão state. Partido Socialismo e Liberdade (PSOL), a sort of umbrella party of various socialist tendencies, doubled its congressional presence and led an impressive presidential campaign despite the relatively low percentage of votes in the first round.

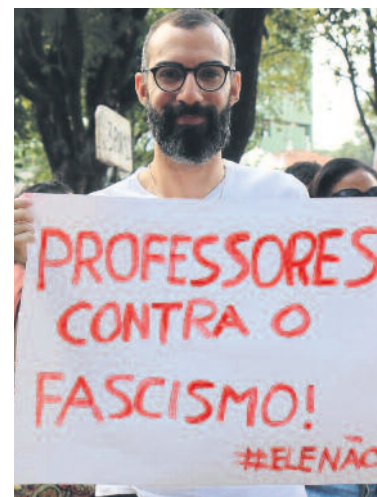
While much smaller than PT, both PCdoB and PSOL remain mass parties that will be at the centre of any resistance to attacks from the extremist right. Likewise the comrades of the

more militant Partido Comunista Brasileiro (PCB) will be at the forefront of the fight back.

Bolsonaro has floated the idea of using counter-terrorism legislation against the parties mentioned above and social movements such as the radical Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST).

These organisations have members and supporters in the millions and are in a position to make life difficult for the new regime. Union density remains high in Brazil and so strike action is likely to play a crucial role going forward.

It should be deeply disturbing to any progressively-minded person to see an extreme right-winger democratically elected in such a strategi-



Class war: Teachers against Fascism...

cally important country as Brazil. The eighth largest economy in the world is now in the hands of a man and a party with no experience in government. The hidden hand of the US State Department and intelligence agencies has no doubt been guiding many of the events in Brazil in recent years.

That insidious influence is now out in the open with Trump's promise that the US and Brazil will work closely on trade and military matters.

All socialists in Ireland must stand in solidarity with the workers' parties and mass movements of Brazil and help the Brazilian community in this country resist the influence of the fascist menace. Ele nunca!

SHOP STEWARDS TRAINING PROGRAMME 2019

Course Title	Course Dates	Duration	Location	Closing date
1st Quarter Employment Law Part 1	Feb 4	1 day	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Workplace Union Representative Training	Feb 11/12/13	3 days	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Health & Safety	Feb 18/19/20/21/22	5 days	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Workplace Union Representative Training	Feb 25/26/27	3 days	Cork	4 Jan 2019
Negotiation Skills Part 1	Feb 26	1 day	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Word Processing Level 5	Feb 26- May 28	14 wks	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Communications & Personal Development Level 5	Feb 26- May 28	14 wks	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Employment Law Part 2	Mar 4	1 day	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Recruitment & Organising	Mar 4/5/6	3 days	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Political & Social Studies	Mar 11/12	2 days	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
Recruitment & Organising	Mar 25/26/27	3 days	Galway	4 Jan 2019
Workplace Union Representative Training	Mar 25/26/27	3 days	Limerick	4 Jan 2019
Negotiation Skills Part 2	Mar 26	1 day	Dublin	4 Jan 2019
2nd Quarter Training & Development Part 1	Apr 1/2/3	3 days	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Employment Law Part 3	Apr 8	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Communications Part 1	Apr 10	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Workplace Union Representative Training	Apr 15/16/17	3 days	Galway	22 Feb 2019
Negotiation Skills Part 3	Apr 30	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Communications Part 2	May 1	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Presentation & Speech Design and Delivery Part 1	May 20	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Training & Development Part 2	May 20/21/22	3 days	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Presentation & Speech Design and Delivery Part 2	May 27	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Employment Law Part 1	Jun 10	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Communications Part 3	Jun 12	1 day	Dublin	22 Feb 2019
Recruitment & Organising	Jun 17/18/19	3 days	Cork	22 Feb 2019
3rd Quarter Employment Law Part 2	Jul 8	1 day	Dublin	31 May 2019
Employment Law Part 3	Aug 12	1 day	Dublin	31 May 2019
Political & Social Studies	Sep 2/3	2 days	Sligo	31 May 2019
Employment Law Part 1	Sep 9	1 day	Galway	31 May 2019
Recruitment & Organising	Sep 16/17/18	3 days	Waterford	31 May 2019
Workplace Union Representative Training	Sep 23/24/25	3 days	Dublin	31 May 2019
Training & Development Part 1	Sep 30/Oct 1/2	3 days	Dublin	31 May 2019
Recruitment & Organising	Sep 30/Oct 1/2	3 days	Dublin	31 May 2019

SHOP STEWARDS TRAINING PROGRAMME 2019

Course Title	Course Dates	Duration	Location	Closing date
4th Quarter				
Communications Part 1	Oct 2	1 day	Cork	30 Aug 2019
Employment Law Part 2	Oct 7	1 day	Galway	30 Aug 2019
Recruitment & Organising	Oct 7/8/9	3 days	Limerick	30 Aug 2019
Health & Safety	Oct 14/15/16/17/18	5 days	Dublin	30 Aug 2019
Workplace Union Representative Training	Oct 21/22/23	3 days	Dublin	30 Aug 2019
Employment Law Part 3	Nov 4	1 day	Galway	30 Aug 2019
Training & Development Part 2	Nov 4/5/6	3 days	Dublin	30 Aug 2019
Communications Part 2	Nov 6	1 day	Cork	30 Aug 2019
Presentation & Speech Design and Delivery Part 1	Nov 11	1 day	Dublin	30 Aug 2019
Presentation & Speech Design and Delivery Part 2	Nov 18	1 day	Dublin	30 Aug 2019
Communications Part 3	Dec 4	1 day	Cork	30 Aug 2019

If you are interested in attending any of these courses, please contact your Mandate Union Official or Mandate Organising & Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email **mandateotc@mandate.ie**
 ● Dublin courses will take place in Mandate Organising & Training Centre ● Please note venue/dates may vary ● To secure your place book early to avoid disappointment



ABOVE Union Representative Introductory course, Galway – (from left to right): Tutor Martin Mahony, Dermot Neary, Oscar Goldman, Alan Monaghan, Triona Ryan and Rachel Ryan (Aileen Cassidy not pictured).

LEFT C&PD (Communications & Personal Development Level 6) evening course – back row (left to right): Elaine Nolan, Aisling Ryan, Jessica Hughes, Stephen Whyte, Marianne Gaffney, Patyca Jakubiec. Front row (left to right): Jacqueline Greeg Fields, Marija Pedic, Renee Fox, Agnes Achramowicz and Marta Owczarek



ABOVE Union Representative Advanced course – (Seated front): Noeleen Byrne and Philomena Lyster. Back row: Jason McKeown, Ursula Dunne, Johnny Murphy, Susan Kerry and Ken McCabe

LEFT Introductory Shop Stewards course – (left to right): Shauna McCracken, Martina Farrell, Jason Kavanagh, Catherine Feerick, Ann Higgins, Daniel Surma, Lynn Boland, and Ben Donohoe

We need to take action – but who will pay the price?

Killing the planet

It's clear Budget 2018 failed miserably to address Ireland's climate change responsibilities. We look at the progressive measures the Australian Labor Government put in place in its 2011 Clean Energy Act and suggest that this provides a useful template for future action...

By David Gibney
Mandate communications officer

"HIKE in carbon emissions puts world on track for catastrophic global warming," warned a recent *Irish Independent* article.

"World must triple efforts or face catastrophic climate change," stated a headline in *The Guardian*.

"We have 12 years to limit climate change catastrophe," warned a UN report published on October 8, 2018.

Yet Ireland is failing on its climate change targets.

The impacts of climate change will be disastrous. In the coming years, we will see an increase in extreme weather conditions, far worse than we experienced in the last 24 months with storms Diana and Emma as well as Hurricane Ophelia, among others, devastating parts of the country.

Hundreds of thousands of people will be displaced as water levels rise and temperatures soar. And the impacts will cost us environmentally, economically and socially, so it's crucial that we act now before it's too late.

Shockingly, in Budget 2018 – which was published a few days after the UN report, *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C (SR15)*, predicted imminent global disaster – there were no measures set out to address the rising crisis. A missed opportunity, in many different ways.

This was an opportunity to address climate change, but also to address some of our other crisis. A properly funded and well-planned policy could



Picture: Australian Labor Party

help us to tackle income inequality, poverty, create decent jobs and reduce carbon emissions all at the same time. Here's how!

In 2012, the Labor Party government in Australia brought in one of the fairest and most progressive taxes on pollution in the world, the *Clean Energy Act 2011*.

This policy contained a [Australian] A\$23 per tonne carbon tax levied on approximately 500 of Australia's largest corporations. The tax aimed to raise about A\$8 billion per year from some of the country's biggest polluters. Those funds would then be allocated towards three strategic areas:

1. Compensation for trade exposed industries;
2. Compensation for low income households;
3. Funding for green technology.

Compensation for trade exposed industries

In some industries, no matter how environmentally conscious a company is, they will have to emit some greenhouse gasses. A steel manufacturing company, for instance, has to burn fossil fuels in order to generate the heat necessary to melt metals. Once a firm could show that they had done everything in their power to reduce emissions to the lowest possi-



Young Australian Labor Party activists, left, calling for a Carbon Tax. Predictably, some aussies, above, took a different view...

Picture: Leonard J Matthews (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

ble amount, they could avail of compensation from the fund.

Compensation for low income households

It is inevitable that a carbon tax will increase the cost of many goods as companies try to transfer the costs to households. During the first year of the Australian carbon tax, it was estimated that the average increase in the consumer price index would be 0.7% – or A\$9 per week. In order to ensure low income and middle income households were protected, the Australian government changed the tax-free threshold at which workers began paying income tax from A\$6,000 per year to A\$18,200 per year. They also ensured social welfare payments and pension payments were increased appropriately.

Funding for green technology

The final element of funding was to incentivise innovation and the production of clean, green technology with local manufacturing as a prior-

ity. If an individual or a company came up with an idea for harnessing wave, tidal or solar energy, for instance, they could apply for a grant from the fund to kick-start their project. It was hoped that Australia would be a leader in the research and development of technology that could save the planet, and at the same time the jobs that would come with such a project would be based in Australia ensuring their economy was protected and the country remained jobs-rich. To show how serious the government were, they provided A\$3 billion per year to this fund.

Did it work? In short, yes.

The Investor Group on Climate Change stated that emissions from companies subject to the tax went down 7% following the introduction of the tax, and the tax was "the major contributor" to this reduction.

Six months after the introduction of carbon pricing the Department of Climate Change and Renewable Energy reported a 9% decrease in emissions from electricity generators.

Nine months after, Australia's emissions of carbon dioxide due to electricity generation fell to a 10-year low, with coal generation down 6% from 2008 to 2009.

However, the tax was only in existence for two short years because the Liberal Party, a right-wing pro-business party, closely aligned with Fine Gael policies in Ireland, was elected into government in 2014 and they undid most of the good work the carbon tax had achieved.



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Droughts...



Picture: Oxfam (CC BY 2.0)

Floods...



Picture: John Wigham (CC BY 2.0)

Storms...



Picture: Nick Johnson (CC BY 2.0)

If this type of carbon tax were to be adopted in Ireland, it would help in slowing down climate change, but it could also help us to tackle poverty, inequality and incentivise new technologies with the potential for new jobs.

Things are never that progressive here, though.

We already have a carbon tax, but it's a crude policy which has a limited impact costing €20 per tonne of carbon emitted. An extra €10 per tonne, for instance, would increase an average car's diesel bill by about €36 per year. The problem, though, is that it's hardly going to dissuade a motorist from making as many journeys, particularly if it's a journey necessary for work.

If we are serious about tackling climate change, we need to address its main cause – capitalism. Market-based solutions, such as the current carbon tax or the Australian one, can slow down the progress of climate change,

“... and for trade unions and organised workers, we all have to understand that there are no jobs on a dead planet”



but it doesn't do enough to address the problems associated with ravenous consumerism and an obsession with "growth".

After all, we can't have infinite growth on a finite planet. And for trade unions and organised workers, we all have to understand that there are no jobs on a dead planet.

Illustration: Frits Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0) HikingArtist.com

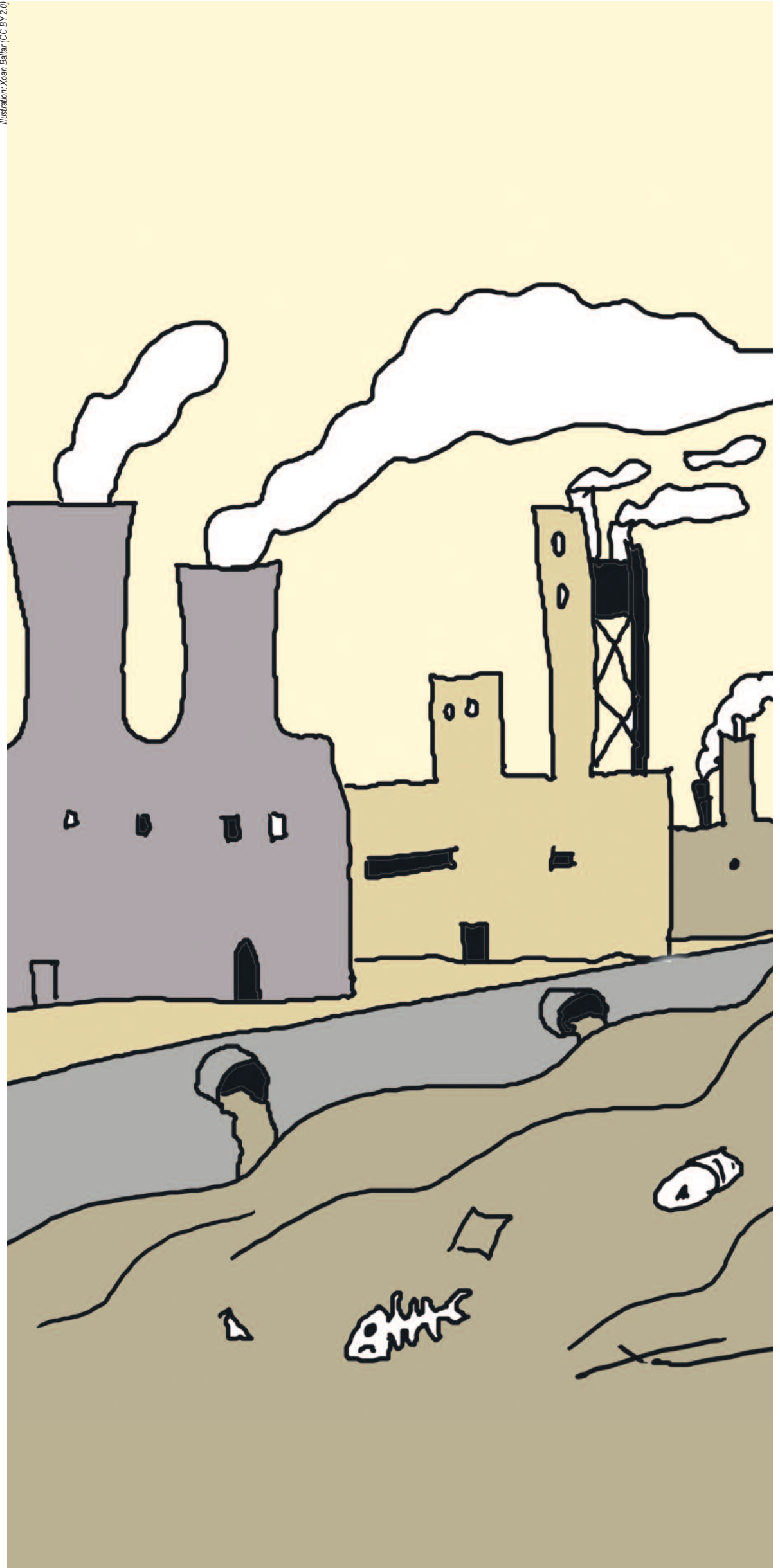


Illustration: Xeon Baltar (CC BY 2.0)

IHRA initiative is by definition a step in the wrong direction

The Irish government's adherence to a new definition of anti-semitism which includes equating criticism of Israeli government policies with anti-semitism is a real threat not only to the fight against the blight that is antisemitism but to freedom of expression and the campaign for Palestinian rights. It is definitively a step in the wrong direction and must not be allowed to become Irish government policy, writes **Eddie Whyte**, an Irish human rights activist resident in Norway.

OPEN conflict has broken out in the Jewish community in Britain with Israeli government supporters slandering fellow Jews with accusations of anti-semitism. The backdrop to the bizarre conflict is a new definition of anti-semitism launched by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) where the Irish government is one of the 31 member states represented.

The IHRA describes itself as an alliance to coordinate and "strengthen the moral commitment of societies and to combat growing Holocaust denial and anti-semitism." Member delegations are a mixture of government officials and academic experts on the Holocaust. Career diplomat Martina Feeny is the head of the Irish delegation which includes several other representatives from government departments as well as academics and representatives from the Irish Jewish Museum, Holocaust Education Trust of Ireland and the Herzog Centre.

The IHRA document that has created so much unrest in the UK consists of a "new" definition of anti-semitism, which is in itself relatively unproblematic. The controversial core of the conflict, however, is the use of so-called "contemporary examples of anti-semitism" which allow for criticism of the state of Israel to be classified as anti-semitism – a move which totally ostracizes the massive opposition by Jewish people both internally in Israel and worldwide to certain Israeli state policies, not least the illegal occupation of Palestine. Attaching the blight of anti-semitism to the nation state of Israel is definitively a step in the wrong direction.

Liberty – the human rights organisation previously known as the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) – has expressed great concern, stating that the IHRA document poses a real threat to freedom of expression. At its Annual General Meeting in May this year, it warned public bodies not to adopt this definition of anti-semitism "because it brings confusion to the fight against anti-Jewish prejudice as well as constituting a threat to freedom of expression."



Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu

Even attorney Kenneth Stern, a key person in IHRA's work on the new definition, has warned that it is being used to "encourage punishment of legitimate expressions of political opinion".

The IHRA maintain that the formulation of a "new" definition was necessary given the differing perceptions internationally of what constitutes anti-semitism and how it manifests itself. According to the organization, the so-called "examples" are separate from the definition itself, but merely provide instances of how anti-semitism can easier be identified. And yet it has now become abundantly clear that the definition and the accompanying examples are being used as part of a deliberate campaign to stifle opposition to the Israeli occupation.

The United Kingdom was the first to officially approve the IHRA document as its official definition of anti-semitism and Israel followed suit a few months later. In both countries, it is currently being used to target organisations which are critical of Israel and support Palestinian rights.

Israeli government supporters have, for example, urged the UK authorities to ban the annual "Israel Apartheid Week" and the Palestinian-



Unbowed: Palestinian youth in Hebron. Arab and Jewish Israelis (below) rally against the controversial new Nation State Act in Tel Aviv



led international Boycott Divest Sanctions (BDS) campaign which they accuse of anti-semitism according to the new guidelines. The last year has seen the British Labour party under massive, sustained pressure amid repeated accusations of anti-semitism brought to bear by the zealots actively quoting the IHRA to challenge Corbyn's leadership of the

party. It is no coincidence that Corbyn's record of supporting Palestinian rights is second to none.

The Israeli government "hasbara" propaganda campaign to portray human rights organisations and pro-Palestinian supporters as anti-semites has been on-going for many years. Last year, the news channel Al Jazeera documented how the Israeli Embassy

in London collaborated with leading figures in both the Conservative and Labour parties to undermine their own parties from within and to "take down" elected representatives who did not follow the Israeli line regarding the occupation of Palestine. Now, the campaign against those who criticize Israel government policy has reached deep into the Jewish community in London.

The controversial Nation State Act, passed by a small number of votes in the Israeli Knesset earlier this year, was met with major demonstrations in Tel Aviv, supported by opposition parties, human rights organisations and non-Jewish minorities in the country. The law has been met with a wave of international criticism with its staunchest critics stating that the new legislation is yet another confirmation of Israel's status as an "apartheid state" and that the law is racist.

Among the more moderate critics in London is Sheila Gewolb, Vice President of the British Board of Deputies of British Jews, a respected organisation that is part of the World Jewish Congress. In a rare intervention in internal Israeli politics, Gewolb declared the law a step in the



Force of occupation: Israeli army reservists enforcing Israel's vice-like stranglehold on the Palestinian West Bank

Pictures: Eddie Whyte

wrong direction. Her concerns garnered support from others in the Jewish community in London, including the New Israel Fund, Yachad and religious leaders like Rabbi Laura Janer-Klausner.

The statement led to open attacks on Gewolb, and the *Jewish Chronicle* recently reported a campaign to censure the vice president accusing her of "anti-semitism", with the IHRA document being quoted to justify the accusations against her. The two deputies who were pushing for the no confidence vote are now themselves subject to a "motion of censure" for supposedly bringing their own organisation into disrepute. It is positively Orwellian.

In addition to Britain and Israel, the national governments of Austria, Scotland, Romania, Germany, Bulgaria and Lithuania have now all adopted the IHRA document. In June 2017, the European Parliament called on member states to do the same – without discussing or problematising the so-called "contemporary examples" which have created such chaos in the London Jewish community.

Although it long been a part of Israeli government strategy to absurdly denounce critics of Israel's occupa-



Israeli flags in the Occupied West Bank

tion of Palestine as anti-semites, it is now being done with the IHRA document in hand – and the targeting is now extended to include Jewish critics of Netanyahu's right-wing government.

Recently the European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine (ECCP), representing 30 unions and three million members from all over Europe, stated that there is strong evidence that the IHRA working definition is already being used in practice "to restrict, outlaw and criminalise...peaceful efforts for Israel's respect of Palestinian human rights."

The IHRA, in which the Irish people are represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is now being used by the Israeli government as part of a cynical policy to cower domestic and international critics into submission.

Ireland has not yet adopted the "new" document and nor should we. It is a damaging step in the wrong direction not only to the fight against anti-semitism, freedom of speech and civil liberties at home but also the right of the Palestinian people to raise their voices in protest at the forced occupation of their homeland.



Computer Training Course QQI Level 3

Mandate Trade Union in conjunction with Skills for Work is offering funded training. The courses are to encourage members back into learning and training whilst aiming towards a QQI Level 3 Award.

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Please see Mandate website for further Training courses at **www.mandate.ie**

Email: **mandateotc@mandate.ie**

Places are limited and are allocated on a first come, first served basis

Picture: European Parliament

Precarious employment – mapping changes in the Irish labour market



AS THE Republic of Ireland emerges from the financial crisis and recession, some commentators are arguing that with falling unemployment, conditions for workers are reverting to something similar to what they were pre-crisis. Evidence from the *Survey on Income and Living Conditions* (SILC), however, suggests otherwise.

In an upcoming working paper, my co-authors and I look at several indicators, pointing to a possible structural change to the Irish labour market. In the analysis, we categorize workers by contract and their hours (part-time/full-time). We also divide part-time workers into categories based on the reasons they state they work part-time.

We distinguish between market barriers, which refer to those who can't find a full-time job, and the equally important category of social barriers which relate to those with obligations at home, such as child-care or the need to care for an elderly relative.

TABLE 1 shows that for young employees precarious working arrangements as a share of employment have grown significantly. The proportion of young workers (up to 30) with traditional full-time and permanent employment has fallen by almost 20 points since 2004 (from 74.9% to 56.1%) with very little growth since 2012, the year the labour market began to turn around. This is despite the upskilling of this group through the recession.

While the rate of temporary employment for young workers has grown in this period (from 13.1% to 18.9%), the share of these temporary positions that only offer part-time

TABLE 1 Working arrangements (% of employees >30 excluding students)

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
Permanent Full-time	74.9	70.4	69.1	60.5	53.8	53.7	56.1
Permanent Part-time (voluntary + part-time students)	3.6	5.2	6.6	9.1	8.1	8.4	9.9
Permanent Part-time (involuntary; market barriers)	*	*	*	7.2	10.2	7.8	5.1
Permanent Part-time (involuntary; social barriers)	*	*	3.9	*	*	*	*
Temporary Full-time	9.0	9.8	9.0	6.1	*	10.0	11.0
Temporary Part-time	4.2	4.2	*	6.8	9.4	10.4	7.9
Occasional no contract/other	4.3	5.6	4.8	*	8.0	*	*

TABLE 2 New jobs (One year or less in current position, excluding students)

	2006	2012	2014	2015	2016
Permanent Full-time	54.5	34.5	42.1	41.4	43.6
Permanent Part-time	13.5	19.2	17.6	17.5	18.9
Temporary Full-time	15.3	13.8	14.4	13.1	11.8
Temporary Part-Time	8.9	19.3	18.5	18.3	13.5
Occasional no contract/other	7.8	13.2	7.4	9.8	12.2

TABLE 3 Working arrangements and deprivation rates (%)

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
Permanent FT	6.9	5.9	5.6	9.6	12.9	16.7	10.7
Permanent PT (voluntary + pt students)	3.5	3.7	4.0	10.1	14.7	17.9	13.3
Permanent PT (involuntary; market barriers)	19.9	6.0	39.6	19.8	25.9	43.1	26.9
Permanent PT (involuntary; social barriers)	12.8	12.8	12.2	22.5	19.6	25.0	17.5
Temporary FT	6.2	7.4	8.9	15.2	17.7	15.0	10.2
Temporary PT	17.8	20.7	8.2	23.2	33.6	37.9	26.7
Occasional no contract/other	8.4	11.3	9.3	30.9	39.4	36.4	25.7

Source: Pembroke, Taft & Nugent (upcoming), SILC (2018)

work has increased even more.

These forms of employment are associated with much higher levels of material deprivation (see **TABLE 3**). The evidence suggests, therefore (not unsurprisingly), that a majority of young people in these positions would rather have stable, permanent jobs.

TABLE 2 shows the growth in various categories of high-risk precarious work for new hires. 54.5% of new hires (one year or less) began with permanent full-time positions in 2006, with similar rates in the years leading up to the financial crisis. By 2016, this had dropped over

10 percentage points with little change in 2014, 2015 or 2016 – three years of strong economic and employment growth.

Efforts to downplay the impact of temporary employment on individuals and families often involve highlighting that temporary employment is a 'stepping-stone' to permanency.

Unfortunately, in the Irish case this narrative is not borne out by the numbers. Not only did a larger proportion of temporary employees state in 2016 that they would rather a permanent job but couldn't find one than did pre-crisis (less are in temporary employment by choice) but the

rates at which temporary employees transition to permanent positions are among the worst in the EU. This applies to part-time workers seeking full-time positions too.

Neither transition rate improved in Ireland in six years of strong economic and employment growth from 2012 to 2017. In 2017, Ireland trailed behind Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Turkey in transitions both from temporary to permanent employment and from part-time to full-time work.

Enforced deprivation is the inability of an individual to afford two or

more of a list of 11 everyday expenses taken to represent an acceptable standard of living. These include the replacement of worn-out furniture, a morning/afternoon/evening out or having family/friends over for a meal/drink.

This consumption-based indicator is particularly useful for an objective examination of living standards over time. **TABLE 3** illustrates that deprivation rates for every category of worker considered in the analysis, including for full-time employees on permanent contracts were higher in 2016 than in the years leading up to the crisis and even as far back as 2004.

Enforced deprivation was almost twice as common in 2016 as it was in 2008 for full-time permanent employees (5.6% vs 10.7%). For part-time workers, whether they work part-time as a lifestyle choice or work part-time due to the fact that they can't find full-time work, enforced deprivation rates have increased.

For part-time workers who choose to be part-time (considered a medium-risk category of precariousness), the rate of these workers who can't afford everyday basic expenses is more than three times higher in 2016 than even as far back as 2004 (3.5%-13.3%).

For the category of part-time temporary workers, the share of which has grown over the period in question, 26.7% were in enforced deprivation in 2016, three times higher than before the financial crisis.

The 'nothing-to-see-here' narrative when it comes to the impact of the financial crisis on the Irish labour market seems to offer comfort in particular quarters and is latched onto with great enthusiasm.

This narrative in effect deflects from the policy failures that have many Irish workers in the position they are in today. SILC data shows that in fact, there is plenty to see, but for some it may make for some uncomfortable viewing.

Ciaran Nugent is a NERI research assistant



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DIARY DATE...

One hundred years on: special 'resitting' of the historic First Dáil

JANUARY 2019 will mark the centenary of the First Dáil. For the first time after many centuries of colonial occupation the Irish people established their own independent parliament in defiance of the British colonial power.

The Democratic Programme adopted by the First Dáil offered a more democratic future as well as a more just and equal Ireland.

To mark this important and historic event the Peadar O'Donnell Socialist Republican Forum is to hold a 'People's Dáil' on Saturday 26th January in Liberty Hall, starting at 11am.

A spokesperson told *Shopfloor*: "The event will take the form of a celebration and a reflection as well as debate and discussion about the future. One of the guest speakers will be veteran civil rights activist Bernadette McAliskey (nee Devlin).

"In the afternoon we are planning a sitting of the People's Dáil from 2pm to 5pm. A new Democratic Programme for the 21st Century will be presented and debated before being adopted by those attending."

The day is open to community organisations, trade union branches, sporting and cultural groups, women's and youth organisations, as well as individuals.

If you would like to attend, email your name, etc to: forumodonnell@gmail.com



Mandate activist Mary Heraty, who has retired, with Divisional Organiser Ciaran Campbell

ACTIVIST RETIRES

Without the likes of Mary, where would we be..?

SATURDAY, June 30 marked the end of an era for Mandate in Castlebar, Co. Mayo. That was the day veteran union stalwart Mary Heraty retired not only from her employment but also from her role as shop steward at Dunnes Castlebar.

Mary was a key activist for the union at this workplace for many years where she represented the organisation's interests as well as that of members to great effect.

She followed in the footsteps of equally longstanding local activist Maud Brogan, who is sadly now deceased. Maud was for many years Mandate's and IDATU's Branch Secretary, so when Mary took on the mantle she had considerable shoes to fill!

And Mary did this without fail and her unwavering efforts and energy in the years of service that followed was a true credit to her.

Her retirement send-off was attended by many of her past and current work colleagues and friends, including Ciaran Campbell, Mandate's Divisional Organiser for the North and West Division.

Paying tribute to Mary, Ciaran told *Shopfloor*: "Mary was a real support to me in our long struggle with this employer. She never flinched when asked to follow Mandate directives or instructions.

"In very difficult circumstances Mary, like many of our Dunnes activists, made sure Mandate had and has a meaningful place in their employments. Without them it doesn't bear thinking about where we would be with this employer. Mary was no exception to this.

"The many people who turned up to her retirement party speaks volumes about how much she is respected and her contribution recognised within her workplace. Her touching speech was not only well received but demonstrated her strong leadership qualities."

Ciaran added: "I was delighted to not only be invited to the event but importantly to ensure that Mandate was present to properly recognise her contribution to our causes and struggles. *Adh mor agus go raibh mile maith agat Mary.*"

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- Module 6** Safety representative - role and rights
- Module 7** The Health and Safety Authority and Enforcement

Members who successfully complete this training course will obtain a progression route into the QQI Level 5 Certificate in Health and Safety

Please contact your Mandate Union Official or Mandate Training Centre on 01-8369699 if you are interested in taking this course; or alternatively you can email your request to mandateotc@mandate.ie



The rush to an EU Army continues

By Frank Keoghan
Secretary, The People's Movement

ON June 13, the European Commission proposed a new €10.5bn Orwellian “European Peace Facility,” an instrument outside the EU’s long-term budget, which would improve the EU’s ability to “prevent conflicts, build peace, and guarantee international security.”

European Commission Vice President Federica Mogherini said: “We are taking measures that will facilitate the rapid movement of Member States’ forces in Europe. Furthermore, with the Commission’s support, I am proposing the establishment of a European Peace Facility that will improve the financing of EU military operations and improve our support for actions by our partners.”

‘Peace operations’

The fund would facilitate the EU’s contributions to “peace operations” led by “partners” such as Somalia and the Central African Republic in the shape of “infrastructure, equipment or military assistance,” which Mogherini confirmed could include the purchase of weapons. No wonder Macron, said in April that “Europe has its destiny bound with Africa!”

Picture: Keith McDuffee (CC BY 2.0)



EU military interventions in Africa, the Balkans and the Middle East are titled “peace-making” or “peace-keeping”. Troops wear EU uniforms on these missions. Their actions are supported by the European Defence Agency, the EU Satellite Centre and

the EU Military Committee (EUMC). The latter oversees the EU Military Staff (EUMS) headquartered in Brussels.

In October, German defence minister Ursula von der Leyen, said that the structures for a European De-

fence Union have been “activated”.

She continued: “The structures that have been ‘sleeping’ for a long time inside the Treaty of Lisbon; we have activated them. That means we now have a legal framework for a European Defence Union, we have a joint

planning process, so that as Europeans we can also develop a structure that tells us when we are going to use our forces.”

She also proposed that EU foreign policy decisions should be made by majority vote, not by consensus: “We



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Places are limited. As there is a high demand for this course please ensure you contact your Mandate Union Official or the Mandate Training Centre on **01-8369699** or email mandateotc@mandate.ie to secure your place.



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Our House Committee Workshops are designed to assist Activists in their role as Union Representatives. Our Workshops run for about 3 hours and can be delivered and tailored by your Mandate Trade Union Official/Organiser to ensure the best time and location is used for our member’s convenience.

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Progression:

Members who successfully complete this training course can apply to do our Union Representative Introductory training which is currently delivered over 3 days.

If you are interested in this training please contact the training centre at:

**Mandate Organising and Training Centre,
Distillery House, Distillery Road, Dublin 3**
Tel: (01) 836 9699 Email: mandateotc@mandate.ie

at an alarming rate



Picture: O'Leigh na hEireann (CC BY 2.0)

Irish Army Scorpion armoured vehicle – Irish defence spending could potentially rise to €6bn a year

are thinking about perhaps moving towards a majority vote in diplomacy and foreign affairs so that we can respond rapidly to crises and speak with one voice, one European voice.”

She added: “So you cannot be blocked by one country”. The pattern has been that Germany usually gets its way within the EU, and – unsurprisingly – there was silence from neutral Ireland in response to this suggestion.

The EU treaty currently states that “the European Council shall act unanimously” when it takes decisions on common foreign and security policy (CFSP). The treaty contains derogations for votes on minor CFSP actions, but even these can be vetoed by any of the 28 EU states on grounds of “vital and stated reasons of national policy”. If these proposals are implemented, Germany, France, Spain and Italy with more than 40% of the votes could recruit a number of smaller countries, such as Poland, and ram the most extreme military measures through the EU Council. Ireland with 0.8% of the vote currently, with other Member States, holds a veto in military matters but – unlike others – has never used a veto on any issue.

Fortification

Simultaneously, the European Commission is continuing the fortification of the EU’s external borders. The European Border and Coast Guard was established in 2016, with a force of 1,500 members. Original proposals estimated that this would increase to 10,000 by 2027; but a recent proposal by Commission President Juncker accelerates this timetable by seven years. He aims to spend €1.3 billion to add an additional 10,000 border guards by 2020.

The powers of this proposed force are particularly notable. It would operate with executive powers and its own equipment, being deployed “wherever and when-



Macron: call for ‘real’ EU Army
Picture: LeWeb Photos (CC BY 2.0)

ever” along the EU’s external borders, as well as in non-EU countries. Its equipment is to include “vessels, planes and vehicles, available to be deployed at all times and for all necessary operations.”

It could send its soldiers even if the destination country doesn’t want them, and Member States surrender the legal right to have a monopoly of force within their own borders. For the first time there will be a pan-EU military force with the right to go anywhere it wants within the EU.

There are also 18 EU battlegroups, each able to deploy 1,500 men speedily from different Member States on a rotating basis. Ireland will participate in a 2019 EU Battlegroup, forming a “significant element” within a German-led battlegroup on standby.

And will Brexit diminish the effectiveness of an EU Army? Well, the old imperial powers, Germany and Britain, have signed a “joint vision statement.” It provides for common steps in training missions outside Europe, in the “fight against terrorism” and in weapons development.

And last month, it was decided that Britain (and the US) will have access to PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) on a case-by-case basis after Brexit. “The invited third state should provide substantial added value to achieving the objectives of the individual project (contributing with resources or expertise),” creating a permanent link between Brexit Britain and the EU Army.

And don’t forget the nuclear option! A review by the Bundestag earlier this year determined that Germany could legally finance French or British nuclear weapons on German soil in exchange for their protection. The EU could do the same, if it changed its budgetary rules.

Germany could be granted shared control over the use of warheads under a “dual-key” system and German ruling circles have renewed a debate about “going nu-

clear.” A “Euro-bomb” with a German finger on an EU nuclear trigger would be an important step on that road. NATO’s 2018 Summit Declaration characterises the EU as a “unique and essential partner for NATO,” and speaks of a “strategic partnership” between the two organisations while agreeing that capabilities developed under PESCO be available to NATO and be “complementary and interoperable”.

Overall military spending in the EU countries totals some €200 billion annually. Some two per cent of GDP has been pledged by members of PESCO, to be spent on weapons development and procurement.

Expenditure

In 2016, Ireland’s military spending was the lowest in the EU and one of the lowest in the world at 0.3% of GDP; in real terms around €960m per annum – so the potential Irish military expenditure to reach the 2% level demanded is an unbelievable €6bn plus per annum. Put in another way, that is half the total national health budget – our biggest budget item. This is absolutely staggering!

Aside from the considerable moral, political and ethical considerations associated with militarisation and the increased risk of conflict, this is an ap-

“ The much-vaunted EU ‘Peace Project’ has morphed into the EU War Project, led by former colonial powers eager to plunder the resources of poorer countries ”

palling waste of resources at a time when the poor are getting poorer and the rich richer. According to the EU’s statistics agency, in 2016, 117.5 million people in the EU were threatened with poverty or social exclusion – 23.4% of its population, corresponding closely with statistics from 2007.

The EU has proven incapable of reducing poverty – particularly in the peripheral states. The concentration of resources in Western EU centres of power – and above all in the German hegemonic pole – continues to fuel the EU’s ambitions to achieve “global player” status through the creation of an EU military-industrial complex and attendant EU Army, in close partnership with NATO.

In the latest developments, Finland has brought the number of members of the EU Intervention Initiative to 11, while Macron, on the centenary of the ‘War to end all wars’, called for “a real EU Army” – a call supported days later by Merkel in the

EU Parliament. Astonishingly, the Commission expressed “delight”. One shudders to contemplate their sentiments in the event of conflict!

The constitutional amendment permitting Lisbon’s ratification in Ireland included the sentence: “Ireland affirms its commitment to the European Union...” So, Ireland, a supposedly neutral independent state has affirmed a constitutional “commitment” to a superior entity made up of other states sharing the common objective of creating an EU army.

Withdrawal

Recently, the biennial delegate conference of Connect trade union unanimously adopted a motion calling for Ireland’s immediate withdrawal from PESCO. This illustrates a growing public awareness that the cost of involvement in PESCO, represents a new priority in government expenditure, to the inevitable detriment of public goods such as housing, education and health. It also points the way for other unions to pass similar resolutions and prepare for the ICTU BDC next July.

And so, the rush to an EU Army continues at an alarming pace. The much-vaunted EU ‘Peace Project’ has morphed into the EU War Project, led by former colonial powers eager to plunder the resources of poorer countries. They have issued a call to arms and we must respond with a call to action, while those of us in EU Member States – including Ireland – must ponder and discuss whether we wish to continue to be members of the EU war machine.



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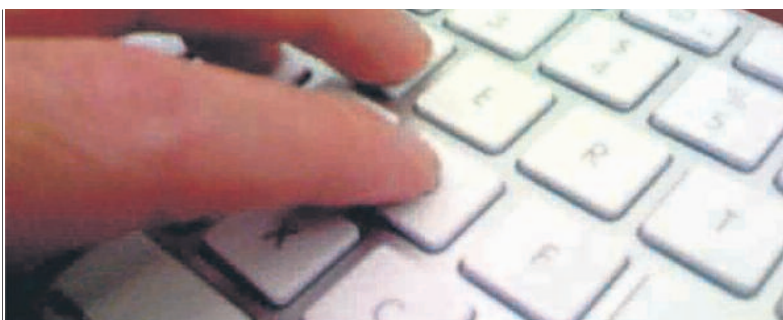
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NEWS



Working through Partnership: Industrial Officer Caroline Clifford, shop stewards Ken Earls and Doreen Curley along with Divisional Organiser Karen Wall and Kellie deLacy of SuperValu MOPI regional HR enjoy the bright new Limerick superstore

Staffing levels boosted after big store revamp

By Karen Wall
Divisional Organiser

RETAIL chain SuperValu MOPI recently launched its state-of-the-art superstore in Limerick. The new outlet is one of a kind and the transformation is amazing.

There are several new additional departments, including a pancake station, ice-cream bar, a pizza bar and an extended off-licence/wine department. Customers can now sit and enjoy a cuppa in the new Frank and Honest coffee dock.

Our members are experts throughout the store assisting and advising their customers whatever the request - from health and wellness queries to supplying info about baby products to

suggesting what wine would go with your dinner party.

Overall, these new additions to the business have had a positive impact with staffing levels increasing to meet the demands of the increased workload.

Of course, staff have had to endure the accompanying turmoil during the renovation work. We all know what that is like from having the smallest work carried out in our homes, but multiply those emotions one hundred fold to gauge what it is like to work in a store undergoing such a transformation.

There were moments of madness but these turned to sheer joy as the builders moved out and things got

somewhat back to normal. Our members can now benefit from the modern workplace and customers can enjoy the pleasant shopping experience.

Throughout the renovation work, our very experienced house committee "Working through Partnership" with the company showed great resilience and innovation in dealing with the smallest to the biggest issues raised during this difficult time.

We, as local officials, were delighted to be invited and attend the opening of the newly transformed store and look forward to working together in Partnership to maintain a successful harmonious workplace and business.

Pay rises at south west SuperValu employments

MANDATE members working in Twohig's SuperValu in Askeaton, Co Limerick, have accepted the following proposal after a ballot. The deal included:

- a 2% pay increase on all rates of pay;
- an increase to the Real Reward percentage by 2%, bringing it to a total of 7%; and
- a review of minimum contracted hours.

Industrial Officer Caroline Clifford told *Shopfloor*: "Staff are to be provided with a written update to their Terms and Conditions of Employment to reflect their current working hours.

"Their average will be estimated using hours worked over the past 12 months. A range of hours will be given as working hours with a margin of two hours over and under the average hours."

She added: "The review of minimum contracted hours will ensure that all part-time staff will have an increase in their minimum hours and this increase will be reflected in writing."

Meanwhile, Mandate members working at SuperValu in Castleisland, Co Kerry, have accepted a pay increase of 2%.



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Govt scheme could regularise status of many undocumented

By Neil Bruton
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

IN OCTOBER, the Government announced a scheme that could potentially regularise the status of thousands of undocumented migrants in Ireland.

This scheme allows any migrant who first registered as a student in Ireland between January 1, 2005 and December 31, 2010 and who commenced their presence in the State lawfully under a student permission, to come forward and apply to have their situation regularised.

Undocumented workers face extremely precarious working conditions and often are not able to have their working rights met. Undocumented workers are at particular risk of exploitation by unscrupulous employers, and regularisation is the most effective way to combat this.

This scheme will go some way to protecting the rights of thousands of undocumented who are currently



working in such situations.

MRCI and, in particular, the Justice for the Undocumented campaign were instrumental in securing this scheme. Also integral to achieving this outcome was the support provided by a range of bodies, including Mandate, and other trade unions that are fighting to protect the rights of workers in Ireland.

Some of *Shopfloor's* readers may be eligible to apply for this scheme and



Picture: MRCI

we would encourage all those who think they may be eligible to check the criteria as soon as possible. The scheme closes on January 20, 2019 and is unlikely to be extended.

Full information on the scheme can be easily accessed through the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland website at www.mrci.ie/2018scheme.

In order to be successful, applicants must meet a series of criteria and must produce a range of supporting documentation. If successful, applicants will receive a letter of approval and be granted Stamp 4S permission to remain in the State for

“Some *Shopfloor* readers may be eligible to apply for this scheme and we would encourage all those who think they may be eligible to check the criteria as soon as possible...”

two years. After two years, if successful applicants have adhered to the terms of their permission they will be granted Stamp 4 permission for a further 12 months.

While we welcome the scheme, MRCI feels strongly that it does not go far enough and we will be campaigning for further schemes to regularise the status of the majority who fall outside the criteria of this current scheme.

To get involved with these campaigns or to join the Justice for the Undocumented group, please email jfu@mrci.ie.

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The looming debt crisis

By Eugene McCartan
Communist Party of Ireland

GLOBAL debt is now becoming a major factor in the instability of the system of capitalism.

Figures show that in the second quarter of 2018 global debt reached a new high, rising to \$260 trillion (that's \$260,000 billion). Global debt levels to GDP ratio passed the 320% threshold for the first time. Of that total, 61% – \$160 trillion – is private debt of the non-financial sector, while 23% is government debt.

The US alone is responsible for 30% of the outstanding public debt. Trump's policies have in the last two years accelerated the growth in US government debt. The US Treasury is followed by the Japanese and Chinese debt agencies and the biggest Eurozone economies.

When attempting to assess the debt we need to take into account the relative size of the debt relative to GDP (see FIG 1).

Using global rankings, by using GDP as the measure, are reversed: Luxembourg ends up in first place with a total debt equal to 434% of GDP, composed almost entirely of corporate debt. While Japan's debt is around 373%, the largest component of this is public debt standing at 216%. France, Spain and the British State are in the top eight for public, private debt.

In the case of Japan, for example, 90% of the debt is in the hands of the central bank, pension funds and domestic banks.

In the Eurozone countries, Member States are unable to manage monetary policy independently. This is because the euro is one of the main mechanisms of control for imposing fiscal policies/controls on Member States.

All public debt of Member States is de facto subjected to foreign law. This debt is on average to the tune of more than 70% held by foreign investors, institutions and individuals more reactive in negotiating on secondary markets and in feeding panic selling.

Another factor that needs to be considered is

“ These are some of the facts driving the push by the state and by employers’ organisation for people to have their own private pension and private health insurance ”

what establishment economists call “implicit debt”, what this means is it does not take into account the present value of financial commitments made by governments regarding pensions and healthcare.

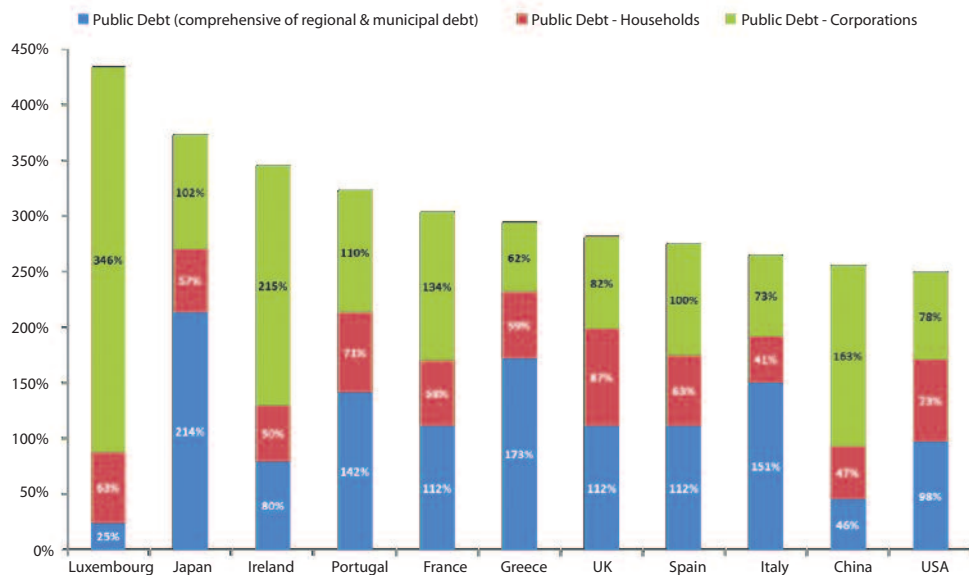
These future debts do not appear in the national accounts or projected into future expenditure. If we take these hidden charges into account, then possible future US debt could possibly be more than \$100trn. Spain, Luxembourg and Ireland could see their liabilities rise by more than tenfold, up to over 1000% of GDP in the case of the Irish state.

These are some of the facts driving the push by the state and by employers’ organisation for people to have their own private pension and private health insurance.

A situation where more and more public money and workers wages will be funnelled into private pension and health schemes, thus allowing the state to undermine and reduce the public pension.

At a global level, corporate debt is the variable that markets fear most. A heavily-indebted private sector is vulnerable to increasing interest rates.

FIG 1: Global Debt (% of GDP - 2017)



Source: Bank for International Settlements

GLOBAL DEBT

\$ 260 TRILLION

Trump's policies have accelerated growth in US Government debt

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Mystery of missing Fine Gael organs

By John Carty
Mandate Divisional Organiser

IN THE mid-1990s, I heard from a former shop steward that Fine Gael had recently held a conference for members of the party who were also members of a trade union. I must admit I was surprised that Fine Gael would have had need to hold such a conference.

Years later, in carrying out research on a completely different matter, I was browsing through a book, titled *A Compilation of Political Party Statutes*.

This book reproduced the Fine Gael's Constitution as it was in 2010. It read:

Rule 5 (ii) The Organs of the Party shall be:
(a) Young Fine Gael
(b) Council of Local Representatives
(c) Fine Gael Women's Group
(d) National Agricultural Advisory Committee
(e) Trade Union Council
(f) Dublin Constituency Forum and such other Organs as may from time to time be established by the Executive Council and ratified by the Árd Fheis (NDI, 2011: 62).

The 2010 constitution went on to state:

TRADE UNION COUNCIL

57. (a) A Trade Union Council shall be established of which all Trade Unionists in the Party shall be entitled to become members.

(b) Subject to the approval of the Executive Council the Trade Union Council may from time to time adopt and amend a Constitution and Rules which shall entirely deal with Organisation, the election of Officers, the holding of National Conferences and the election of an Executive.

(c) A member of the Trade Union Group should be a member of, and shall, if a member, be eligible for election to office in a Branch having a functional area (NDI, 2011: 88).

However, the latest version of Fine Gael's Constitution - which is available online - is dated August 2014 and states:

(ii) The Organs of the Party shall be:

- (a) Young Fine Gael**
- (b) Council of Local Representatives**
- (c) National Agricultural, Food & Rural Development Forum and such other Organs as may from time to time be**

Picture: William Murphy (CC BY-SA 2.0)



Going, going, gone... Fine Gael Ard Fheis in 2012. Between 2010 and 2014, a number of party organs, including a Trade Union Council and Women's Group, seem to have been shelved...

established by the Executive Council and ratified by the Árd Fheis.

For some reason the Women's Group, the Trade Union Council and the Dublin Constituency Forum as organs of the Fine Gael party have been dropped.

You may ask why this is so. Perhaps Fine Gael, with its close ties to big business, was embarrassed by trade union members in that party writing letters on behalf of internal party organs to newspapers such as one letter which was published in the *Irish Times* in 1998:

Sir, Shame on Ryanair's multi-millionaire executives for their blackleg baggage-handling antics as reported by Padraig Yeates (The Irish Times, January 10th).

It is a complete nonsense that in a mature Western European democracy an employer should be so vindictive as to deny an employee the right to join a trade union. But Ryanair is not just an employer. It is a symbol.

It is a child prodigy of the free-enterprise 1980s. It is the flagship of free market economic gurus who see in its very existence the realisation of their political agenda.

It's more than an airline. It's a philosophy. It promotes a culture of loyalty, dedication, enterprise, team spirit. In return the employee gets an equal share of the spoils. That, at least, is the theory.

Here are the facts: Last May's public flotation of Ryanair made more than £64 million for the Ryan family, but only a modest profit-sharing scheme for the employees, leaving handlers at Ryanair earning £2,400 less than their counterparts in Aer Lingus.

This so-called profit-sharing is a derisory insult to the workers who contributed much to the success of Ryanair. The Fine Gael Trade Union Council (FGTUC) consists of grass-roots members of Fine Gael who are also trade union members and activists. We support the

right of the Ryanair employees to join a trade union and we call on Ryanair management to recognise that right in a responsible manner. - Yours, etc. Martin Madden, PRO, FGTUC.

Some 20 years later, it would appear from Fine Gael's most recent constitution, that if you are a party member, it no longer respects your views if you happen to be speaking as a trade unionist.

Or could it be there are not enough trade union members in the party to justify the continuation of the Trade Union Council? If this is the case, it begs the question: why was the party organ, the Fine Gael Women's Group, dropped in the 2014 constitution?

UPDATE: In September, Mandate emailed the Fine Gael press office, asking for an official party comment on the above article. To date, we have received no reply.

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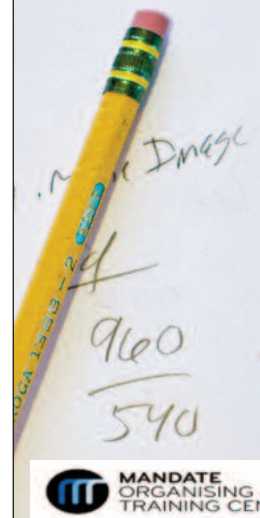
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